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ABSTRACT

This publication is a collection of representative presentations from a conference on school-age child care which took place in 1979 at Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts. The book is divided into four sections. Part I, the Introduction, explores the differing needs of children in school-age child care programs, and discusses the way children's needs must be taken into account by personnel planning and developing child care programs. Part II focuses on issues identified as areas of interest and concern by practitioners during the planning stages of the conference. Issues discussed in this section include the critical elements of effective school-age child care, parent and staff cooperation, money management, and the practitioner's role in the evaluation process. Different types of existing school-age child care programs are described in Part III. These include the First Avenue After-School Day Care Center for low income children in New York City: the St. Louis Child Care Services: the the Brookline After-School Special program: and an after-school center in an industrial park. Also included in this section are portions of a workshop discussion about the role of family day care for school-age children. Part IV, the Conclusion, offers a summative discussion of program and policy issues concerning school-age day care centers. (Author/MP)

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SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE:
Programs and Issues

Papers from a June 1979 conference at Wheelock College

Edited by

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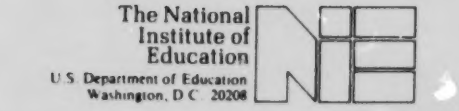

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The papers in this volume reflect the views of their authors at the time of the conference at which they were presented; they do not necessarily represent the current status of any program described.

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We have many people to thank for helping to make this book a reality, including those who participated in the conference upon which the book is based and those who helped work on the book itself.

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In the course of reviewing the conference proceedings and editing the papers received, we were forced to eliminate some from the book due to space constraints. We would like to acknowledge the special contributions of many individuals who participated in the conference, but who are not represented in the book. Our thanks to Gertrude Hoffman, specialist on day care services with the Administration of Public Services in Washington, who helped in many ways to insure the success of the conference. Other presenters whose papers are not published in this volume include Robert Weber, Attorney with the Children's Law Project in Boston; Millicent Grant, Coordinator of the Extended Day Program in Fairfax County, Virginia; Irwin Blumer, Prinicipal of the Driscoll School in Brookline, Massachusetts; and Alan Cohen, Director of the Driscoll extended day care program; and James Strickland, Director of Child, Inc., and Check-a-Child, Austin, Texas. Our apologies to Brookline school committeewoman Natalie Zuckerman, whose excellent paper was lost and does not appear in this collection. We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of members of the panel on family day care, whose panel discussion is summarized in this volume: Amy Squibb (panel coordinator), James Baxter, Richard Ardizzone, Nancy Smith, and Julian Wilson.

We were encouraged in the publication of this volume by the New England Association for the Education of Young Children, and especially by Edgar Klugman. They believed in the importance of disseminating information on school-age child care, and are participating in the national distribution of this book. Finally, we owe our sincerest thanks to Charlotte Watkins and Paula Wagemaker at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. They took an active interest in this project from its very earliest stages. Their perceptive comments, their firm editorial guidance, and their many months of hard work are responsible in large part for this book.

Andrea Genser
Clifford Baden
Editors

Preface

Andrea Genser

Field Research Associate, School-Age Child Care Project, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women; former Educational Coordinator, Title XX Day Care Training, Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts

Clifford Baden

Director, Continuing Education, Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts

It is difficult, in our present society, to ignore the statistics on the growing participation of women in the labor force, the rise in two-wage-earner families, and the steadily increasing numbers of single-parent families. One consequence of these trends is the growing number of school-age children who are in need of care before and after school and during school vacations. As a result, parents around the country are becoming increasingly vocal about their need for day care for their school-age children. In a survey of 10,000 working women conducted during 1978, by Family Circle magazine, nearly 30% with children between the ages of 6 and 13 reported leaving their children home alone or with brothers and sisters after school. Yet of these same mothers, not one in a hundred said she would leave her children home alone if given the choice.[1]

Thus far, very little attention has been paid to the after-school care needs of school-age children. In addition, there is very little agreement as to what constitutes a high quality school-age child care program, who are appropriate staff members, and what type of training would be most beneficial to those providing school-age child care. There is very little literature in the field. In fact, there is no general agreement as to exactly what "school-age child care" means.

In an attempt to answer some of these questions, the Office of Continuing Education at Wheelock College offered a course, in the fall of 1978, expressly for teachers working in Title XX-funded group school-age day care programs. The experience of working with the instructor on planning, implementing and evaluating this course convinced us that a forum was needed whereby people could begin to talk to each other and share thoughts and information on school-age child care. We believed that this forum should allow as many different individuals as possible to come together to articulate the questions that needed to be addressed and to begin to seek solutions.

In December, 1978, a small planning group met at Wheelock College to discuss the possibility of a conference on school-age child care. That original group included James Levine, Research Associate at Wellesley College, Center for Research on Women; Michelle Seltzer, Assistant Direc-

tor of the Human Relations/Youth Resources Commission, Brookline, MA and advisor to the Brookline Extended Day Programs; James Robertson, Director of the Plowshares Child Care Program, Inc., Newton, MA; Gwen Morgan, faculty member at Wheelock College and national day care consultant; Andrea Genser, Educational Coordinator of Wheelock's Title XX Day Care Training Program; and Clifford Baden, Director of Continuing Education at Wheelock. At a later date, Lora Browne joined the Title XX staff at Wheelock and worked closely with us on all aspects of organizing the conference.

The outcome of that meeting was general agreement that an excellent conference could indeed be organized. While it might certainly attract a few people from out of the New England region, it was expected to attract the majority of its participants from the Northeast. In addition, all of us felt that it was important to hold the conference fees at a level that would be affordable to day care teachers and that would encourage the diversity among the participants we sought. Eventually, a two-day program was planned to include total group presentations and many small seminars on program models and issues.

The proposed conference was received by the Wheelock administration with enthusiasm. We were encouraged to move ahead on the planning and supported directly by both the College President, Gordon Marshall, and the Academic Dean, Elizabeth Ann Liddle. For an institution like Wheelock College, "committed to improving the quality of life for young children and their families," sponsorship of a conference on school-age child care was seen as a most appropriate service to the community.

The conference itself surprised us in many pleasant ways. Perhaps most significant was the geographic distribution of the participants. Although the majority of the two hundred people in attendance were, as expected, from New England, a total of twenty-five states were represented, including California, Minnesota, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Florida, Wisconsin, Mississippi, and Kansas. From our phone conversations it seemed that many others would have come had it not been for the costs of travel and lodging. In talking with those who did travel great distances the message was the same: "This is the first time I've ever seen anything just for school-age child care." "I'm anxious to find out what is goind on around the country and how others solve some of the problems we have."

Not only did people come from all over the country, but teams of co-workers came together. Who were they? Many were school-age child care program directors and teachers. Some were involved in state, county or city social services. Many were involved in the provision of training. Some worked in public school-based programs administered by agencies like the YMCA or run by the schools themselves. Others worked for non-profit agencies that ran group after-school and family day care programs. Still others worked in programs affiliated with community schools. And of course, some came because they wanted to start a school-age program in their own community.

We were surprised by how anxious participants were for written materials on school-age child care. We had set up a display table with a collection of all the program materials brought by conference participants. Many people sat for hours, poring over the materials, jotting down names and addresses. This hunger for information, coupled with the quality of the presentations and the inquiries we received from individuals who were unable to attend, convinced us that a publication of the conference papers was a must. This book is the result.

This book of readings brings together some of the most important and representative presentations from the conference, ones we believe will be of most widespread interest and usefulness. Like the conference, the book is intended for those who are currently involved in some aspect of school-age programs and those concerned individuals -- parents, teachers, community representatives, school officials and others -- who want to know more about these programs.

The book is divided into four sections. Part One, the Introduction, lays the foundation by exploring the differing needs of school-age children across the age range normally found in school-age child care programs. Using numerous examples from her thirty-plus years of experience in school-age programs, Docia Zavitkovsky creates vivid profiles of school-age children, highlighting their developmental characteristics. The remainder of her paper is devoted to a discussion of the way these needs must be taken into account by those planning and developing school-age child care programs.

Part Two focuses on issues in school-age child care that were identified by practitioners during the planning stages of the conference as areas of interest and concern. The section begins with Judith Rosen reminding us that "day care for the school-age child means different things to different people," as she discusses some of the ingredients found in effective programs. This is followed by Michelle Seltzer's article on "Starting Programs," which is rooted in her experience over a seven-year period with the Brookline, MA parent-run, "extended day" programs. Her message is clear: the critical elements are "documentation, persuasion, and collaboration." James Robertson's paper on staff development defines the topic, explores the role of the leader, and stresses the importance of clear expectations. He examines a variety of alternative models for inservice education and stresses that staff development in the context of school-age child care programs presents a special challenge because of the lack of supports and resources in this area. Barbara Schram's paper on "Parents and Staff" explores the benefits of a parent/staff teamwork approach, examines the barriers to parent/staff interaction, and discusses the outcomes that can be expected when this philosophy is embraced by child care programs. Specific techniques that have proved successful in enhancing parent/staff relationships are spelled out. In "The Pitfalls of Managing Money," Roger Neugebauer draws upon his experiences in helping programs to solve various financial difficulties. Common fiscal problems and ways to avoid them are enumerated. In the final paper in this section, program evaluation is presented as a vehicle for clarifying program goals and improving school-age child care programs. Joan Bergstrom and Janet

Reis emphasize the practitioner's integral role in all phases of the evaluation process.

The third section of the book describes different types of existing school-age programs. The First Avenue After School Day Care Center, as described by the director, Charles Jarm, serves primarily urban, low-income immigrant families who have come to New York City from all over the world. This center strives to strengthen the family by being sensitive to the community it serves and by meeting the special needs of that community. In the second article, director Betty Van Wyck describes and discusses the Child Care Services in Biddeford, Maine which features both home and center-based care, and integrates young children with special needs. The next two articles present different perspectives -- those of a parent and the program director -- on a parent-controlled, public school-based program for older school-age children (grades 3-6); the program, located in Brookline, Massachusetts, features town-wide eligibility. Following these articles, Meg Barden writes about her experiences building "Paradise" -- an unusual after-school program, initially designed by the children and located in an industrial park. The last article in this section recapitulates a panel discussion on family day care that took place at the conference. Michelle Seltzer, who participated in the discussion, summarizes the panel's observations on this often-overlooked format for school-age child care.

The conclusion, written by Gwen Morgan, sums up many of the concerns and themes that emerged during the two-day conference. She speaks about the issues of quality and the lack of training for school-age child care staff. The difficulties of running school-age child care programs are reiterated, but her message is, "over and over, I learned, it can be done." Her paper concludes with a discussion of society's fears of day care and offers specific suggestions for overcoming them. Gwen Morgan's final words are optimistic and encouraging. She urges us to continue our work on behalf of children, for "school-age day care . . . is an issue that can be won."

Footnote

1. Who's Taking Care of the Children? Family Circle, Vol. 92, No. 3, February 20, 1979, p. 88.

Part I: INTRODUCTION

Children First: A Look at the Needs of School-Age Children

Docia Zavitkovsky*

Director, Santa Monica Preschool Education and Children's Centers, Santa Monica Unified School District, Santa Monica, California

There is no denying that the need for school-age child care is a social problem. More mothers enter the labor market each year. (In California, for example, it is predicted that by 1984 the number of children under fourteen years of age whose mothers work will increase by 215,000.)[1] As a consequence, an increasing number of school-age children from varied ethnic, racial and socioeconomic backgrounds need high quality day care which does not exist in sufficient quantity in many communities. For too many school-age children there is "no place to play, nothing to do, and nowhere to go before school and after school closes."[2]

Five Myths About School-Age Care

Despite this obvious need for day care services during the time parents are away at work and children are not in school, too many people are willing to assume that school-age children do not need child care programs because they are old enough to fend for themselves, assume responsibility for their own welfare and arrange their own leisure time activities. For children from five to twelve years of age, this assumption is a myth.

In relation to that myth, it has seemed easier for the public to accept the need for child care services for children under five years of age than for childen five and over. One often hears, "I didn't need experts to take care of me; I grew up without child care" or "I grew up without a lot of supervision and I turned out O.K." But school-age children do need adult supervision and guidance. They cannot be expected to be totally responsible for their health and well being, to be self sufficient in environments that offer no opportunity for positive growth and development; to make constructive, satisfying use of their before and after school hours.

A second myth is that almost anyone, if friendly, warm and breathing, can develop and carry out a good program that meets the unique, complex, individual and group day care needs of school-age children. Of course, school-age children in family day care, group, or center care need friendly, caring people supervising and guiding them, but they also need to be with adults who have knowledge and understanding of how children

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*My appreciation to Rosalie Blau, Sylvia Louda and Ann Zavitkovsky for their comments and suggestions.

grow and develop -- adults who can facilitate children's activities, encourage individuality and stimulate ideas. Children need people who are interested in, and feel responsible for, seeing that their day-by-day experiences take place in an environment which promotes growth and learning.

A third myth is that most communities have accepted the responsibility for planning, organizing, coordinating and implementing school-age child care services. Certainly each community has the responsibility for assessing the particular needs of its children and tailoring staff and activities to meet these needs. As children begin to move away from the home base into the community, they develop more self-reliance and competence to make choices and test their ability to manage themselves; at this point, coordination within the community of agencies, organizations, institutions, and day care providers becomes increasingly necessary. Through coordination of many activities provided for older children, community agencies extend the services of the day care program.

The contention that there is not enough money to support high quality school-age care provides the basis of the fourth myth. Helen Heffernan, formerly Chief of the California Division of Elementary Education, used to say that "what we value we will pay for." The fact that money is not made available merely indicates that day care for school-age children is not high on the priority list.

Finally, it is a myth that parents who need day care programs are not concerned about or interested in the quality of care their children receive. Parents are interested and concerned. In fact, many of them are desperate because care is not available. Good day care programs are extensions, not substitutes, for children's homes. Children need to feel that their parents are an accepted and an integral part of the day care family. Children cannot be separated from their parents and expected to follow two different paths. There must be a blending of home, school and day care.

Like all other human beings, school-age children have basic needs: to be nourished, clothed and sheltered and to be loved, valued, and accepted as important.

Children need to be respected for the people they are, not because they are good or bad, outgoing or shy, affectionate or cold, but because they are persons in their own right. It hurts to be ignored, rejected, ridiculed, isolated or disciplined unjustly. It feels good to belong, to be listened to, to be included, to be understood, to be praised when praise is due. I remember an eighth-grade student who participated in one of our child development centers. She was too heavy, had a poor complexion, and did not relate well to children or adults. It wasn't until she established a relationship with a four-year-old who was pleased to see her arrive and sorry to see her leave that she began to enjoy being a participant. The turning point was the day I overheard the four-year-old, who was sitting on the student's lap, say as she softly patted the student's cheek, "I don't like how you look, but I like how you be!"

Like all other human beings, school-age children need security, freedom, structure and challenge in their lives. These considerations should form an integral part of any day care program. In terms of security children need to know that someone is in charge of things, that there is a dependable base from which to operate, whether in the home, in a family day care home or in a center. Freedom requires that children are able to move forward, to acquire and develop new skills, and "to satisfy curiosity, use equipment for exploring, probing and manipulating in every possible way." Freedom, however, does not mean that children can run riot. Structure is necessary to ensure that children know the limits within which they can explore their freedom. For example, the school-age child's relationships with authority may be altered because the child is in a new situation which may have values different from those experienced in the home. In this situation the child needs to know what is expected and permitted. Essentially, structure necessitates limits which are clearly and firmly defined and yet which offer a certain amount of flexibility to meet the needs of a particular child. Finally, challenge provides school-age children with the opportunity to experience and to expand their horizons. However, it should be realized that in meeting challenges children set themselves (or have set for them) goals which are attainable.

Another factor to consider in the provision of school-age day care is that no two children are alike. As Mister Rogers writes in The Purple Adventures of Lady Elaine Fairchilde, "We all have similarities and differences just as sea shells or grains of sand are different" and "People differ in different ways: size, age, appearance ability to see or hear." Although there is no typical school-age child, there are certain characteristics that seem to stand out for different ages. It is important to know what these differences are if we are to be responsible for planning and implementing programs that meet school-age children's day care needs.

It helps to know, for instance, why five-year-olds in general need more supervision and guidance than ten-year-olds. Five-year-olds stay nearer to home base; they have problems with sharing and losing; they wiggle when sitting and get into all kinds of body positions and screw up their faces when drawing or writing; they are active, busy and vigorous; they know the difference between right and wrong, are easily embarassed yet can handle most routine situations; they use adult gestures, mannerisms, postures, affectations and intonations; and they act out what they know of the adult world and change roles rapidly to meet the demand.

Ten- and eleven-year-olds, on the other hand, are more sophisticated, but they are also more moody. They tease, test, talk back, are more rebellious, and yet are open to distraction. At one center, the children have a chant: "Don't blame me, don't blame me, I did it 'cause he told me so, so don't blame me." They sing it, dance to it, act it out and laugh when one child admits, "O.K. I did it." They are involved with team sports and competition, with cooking, billiards, puppet shows, records (jazz, rock and roll), joke books, projects, clubs, rituals, riddles and rhymes (like "Inka Bink, a bottle of ink, the cork fell out and wow you stink"). They keep journals, write plays, are interested in making money, and like to move beyond the home base to the community. They want to have the freedom to make choices about what to do and where to

go. They are gaining in height and weight. Girls may be menstruating and may be concerned about their looks, especially their skin and hair. Peer relationships are all important. Usually, they are not neat about clothes or rooms.

Planners of day care programs must take these differences between age groups into consideration. I have seen many programs in which children who have been in a center for five or six years are still being fed the same daily schedule that long since has been outgrown -- a pabulum, patty-cake program, boring and inviting trouble. However, an activity that is handled well by the staff can be appropriate for children of different ages.

When a volunteer brought crayfish to one of the centers, I observed both how children of different ages react to the same situation and how these reactions can be guided by program staff to promote interesting learning experiences for the children. The five-year-olds were enthralled with the crayfish. Although they found fish scary when they picked them up, they picked them up anyhow -- trusting the adult when she told them that the crayfish would not pinch them if held the proper way. Territorial fights were watched intently, and the children were amazed at how the crayfish crawled out of their hard protective shells (their exo-skeletons, one child told me) because they had outgrown them. From observation, the children learned that crayfish are weak and vulnerable to attack until their new shells harden and that when the appendages (claws) break off they regenerate. The crayfish provided the focus of many discussions -- the survival of the fittest, the meaning of weak and strong, what crayfish ate, how they moved, and so on. In contrast, the ten-year-olds, even though shown how to handle the crayfish, were not willing to take the risk of being pinched. They were attentive to them in other ways. When some of them were "ill" they set up a crayfish hospital and put the sick ones in separate pools, adding grass and rocks for their comfort. They dissected the crayfish and compared their body structure to that of their own body structure and later became involved in reading and studying about other sea creatures. When the crayfish died, the children talked about death -- the death of grandmothers, friends' dogs and cats, as well as the crayfish. Both the five- and ten-year-olds learned a great deal from their experiences with the crayfish. Sylvia Louda, the teacher who shared this activity with me said, "I tell the kids, 'Turn on the TV in your brain, kids. The's where it is . . . see it, hear it, feel it . . . the show will never be over and there will be no commercial interruptions.'"

One can store information, but knowing how to apply one's knowledge is the important thing. I remember being critical of a school where they were teaching ellipsoids in kindergarten and then I went out to the yard at recess and heard two children having an argument; one was saying, "You old ellipsoid head" and I looked and sure enough the kid's head was shaped like an ellipsoid!

Ten-year-olds should have the freedom to choose where they want to go as long as they notify the adult where they are going and when they will return, as long as they check in and out of the home base. They should have the freedom to use any materials or equipment as long as it is

used appropriately and returned to the place it belongs. (Returning it to the right place is often difficult for them!) Rules are a big thing with ten-year-olds. One group, when deciding on what rules to follow when going to the beach, came up with the usual don't shove, don't push, don't throw sand, ask the lifeguard about the waves, remember your towel, don't get lost. But the best one was, "If you're drowning, raise your right hand."

School-age children do not come to a day care program from a vacuum. They are a product of their experiences with people and things in their world. Children are not born with attitudes and prejudices; they learn them. They are not born with an experiential base; they acquire it. They are not born with a value system; they develop it. They are not born knowing how to read, write and do math; they learn how. They are not born generous, considerate, and kind; they learn from their models, explicitly or incidentally, positively or negatively, constructively or destructively, accurately or inaccurately, joyously or gloomily; sometimes they learn the opposite of what we would think. (Judy Cauman* used to tell the story of the little girl who, afraid of the dark, was sent to spend the night with the little girl who was not afraid of the dark. Next morning there were two little girls afraid of the dark.)

Essentially, children's experiences make them certain or unsure of themselves as people, confident or doubtful of themselves in relation to the adults upon whom they are dependent for protection, support and guidance. They are part of a family that has certain beliefs, attitudes, prejudices, expectations and standards for doing things. School-age children in day care programs need adults who recognize that because children's experiences are different the children themselves are different. Adults are needed who respect and listen to the children, who know what activities are appropriate, who challenge their curiosity, who are flexible and inspire confidence, who do not talk down to them, and who are available. In The Sense of Wonder, Rachel Carson wrote, "If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in."

In dealing with children a sense of humor is a must. Children's humor is a message conveyor. It helps them explain what they are thinking and how they are feeling. There's a classic story of two children on a field trip. One child says to the other, "Look, there's a rabbit," and the other one says, "No, don't look -- we'll have to draw it!" Young children often know facts in a global way but are not quite accurate. Take, for example, the young child who rushes out from a group of five- and six-year-olds playing house and cries out, "Get a mother quick. . . there's a baby being born in there." School-age children in day care settings like adults who respond to their senses of fantasy and humor with a light touch. One teacher in one of the centers, knowing that she was going to have trouble getting some ten- and eleven-year-olds who were playing a game to come in and eat, donned earphones, grabbed a stick to serve as a

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*Before her death, an author and also a consultant for the Child Welfare League of America and the NANE Board (now known as NAEYC).

microphone and called out, "This is the General speaking. The game is over. Lunch is being served on the patio. Company dismissed. Last call -- on the double!" The kids responded and literally tore in!

Adults can do a great deal to nurture self-discovery and self-discipline in children in day care programs by helping to create an environment where children have the opportunity to try many options, to experiment and stretch their minds, to feel safe to try even though they may not be successful the first time.

Children form close attachments to caring adults. When one of our teachers went on vacation she received a letter which expressed how one child felt about her being away.

Dear Lois,

How are you. We all miss you very much. We went skating yesterday and all the child care went. Gail pushed Geraldene down and you can guess where she landed. Jeanee isn't crying as much anymore. Candy still sucks her thumb and goes out with her towel. We are having fun dancing but we all fight over the skirts. Beryl goes around with her hair hanging in her face. Kathy got some false fingernails and she looks like a lady with them. Jeanee was crying because she couldn't right a letter. I wish you would come back soon.

Love and kisses, Carla

P.S. Lois, hurry back.

Children do not always see adults as adults think they are being seen. A seven-year-old who has been in children's centers since she was three came in to the teacher and asked her to go outside and settle a fight the girl was having with her friend. The teacher, knowing the children well, told Courtney that she should go back and try to settle it with her friend and that they could be back playing in the time it would take her to come in and out. Courtney said, "The trouble with you is that you've forgotten what it's like to be a child." The teacher said, "I'm sorry," and Courtney replied, "Boy, you just don't understand me. My mother doesn't take 'sorrys' and neither do I."

School-age children in day-care programs need affection which includes trust. They need praise when praise is due, and consistency so they know what is expected. School-age children need time. Too often we hurry them along from activity to activity, giving them little opportunity to savor an experience slowly and thoroughly until it becomes wholly their own. Someone once wrote that it was no use to give children things unless we gave them time to keep them too. Alice Keliher, a leader in the field of early childhood education, asks that we now and again slow down the pace for children, allow them to relax more, and provide time for them to reflect, ponder and dream. If children are going to live to be 100 years old, she asks, why do we have to accomplish everything for them in their first twelve years?

The daily routines of coming and going, mealtimes, snack times, quiet time, and cleanup time make up the basic framework of a child care program. The variety of activities and opportunities for fun and worthwhile experiences offered is limited only by the number of different opportunities in the community and the effectiveness of the staff in finding ways for children to participate.

School-age children need indoor and outdoor space that can be adapted to a variety of uses and they need material and equipment suited to their development. And, above all, school-age children need to be heard!

Children's Voices

I have included the following comments by the children I work with because I think they illustrate many of the points I have made above -- in particular, the point that each child is an individual.

Kitty, age 7: "I don't like it when all I hear is 'Kitty and Renay, you cannot fight at this school. When you're climbing on that jungle gym, Renay and Kitty, you can't push other people down. The swings are gonna break if you keep swinging so high, Renay and Kitty. You may not scream and yell on Renay's birthday.'"

Courtney, age 7. When Courtney's mother told her that she couldn't have a party for her but that she would pick her up early and take her and a friend out to dinner, Courtney said to her teacher, "Now I ask you, is that the best that my mother can do on my birthday?"

Nicki, age 12, to Barbara, the teacher.

N. "The kids always tease me -- they tease me about my pimples."
B. "I've never really noticed."
N. "If you're close, you can really see them."
B. "You know, Nicki, sometimes I still break out with a few pimples during my period."
N. "But Barbara, (very emphatic)...this is my whole face and my hair -- it always looks like this. I brush it, but when I get to school, it looks a mess. I wish it looked like yours. Oh, I forgot to do something, I'll be back." (Nicki does not return.)

A letter from Herbert's teacher: Dear Mrs. C., Herbert has been much better today although there is still room for improvement. He has listened more during group discussions. He is trying very hard to remember to stop talking when the teacher is talking. I know he will show us that he can do even better next week. Sincerely.

P.S. Also please ask him to try to avoid Bobby's influence. He appeared to be imitating behavior!

From Herbert, age 7. Dear Mrs. C., I am quitting school. Herbert

Ann, age 11. "You expect more of me than I want to do. It's not that I can't -- it's just that I don't want to. I'm tired of being bigger than they are. Let them be bigger than I am for once. I'm always bigger and I have no one to be bigger than me."

Jo, age 10, to Pat, the teacher:

J. "I don't like getting sent to sit down."
P. "What do you do so that you have to sit down?"
J. "I get mad and hit people."
P. "Why don't you talk about it instead?"
J. "That's what I'm doing, I'm working on it."

The following are excerpts from group discussions with 8, 9, and 10 year olds.

Q. "What do you like to do?"

A. "Play pool, play pingpong, play baseball, go to the beach, bowl, practice the dance to do for the other kids, make up a play, go on field trips, sell leather things to make money for the Dodger game, science, making models and puppets."

Q. "What would you rather not have in child care?"

A. "Quiet times, sand, mean teachers, bossy teachers, busy work, coloring."

Q. "What don't you like?"

A. "People who hit me."
"When my friends say, 'I don't like you anymore.'"
"I don't like dumb kids or people who fight me or kids who put hands on my back."
"I don't like boys. They're mean--especially David."

Q. "What are your favorite TV shows?"

A. Mork & Mindy
Charlie's Angels
Eight is Enough
Battlestar Galactica

Q. "Who are your favorite movie stars?"

A. Clint Eastwood
Jane Fonda
John Wayne
Clark Gable

Q. "Who is your favorite TV star?"

A. Robin Williams
Pam Drawber
Ricardo Montalban
Kate Jackson

Q. "What is your favorite record?"

A. Heat Wave
Do You Care?

Q. "What kind of people do you like?"

A. "I like people who are nice and respectful."
"I like strict and nice in the middle people."
"I just like good, nice teachers."

Q. "What do you want to be?"

A. "A singer, have a mansion, live by a lake, have three girls and four boys, pick a man right for me, who cares for me and respects me."
"I want to be a rich housewife, a doctor or a singer or a tall model. I don't have to be married. I'm just going to be rich."

Q. "What are you afraid of?"

A. "Junk, PCP, Angel Dust, sharks, rapists, hi-jackers and Jack the Ripper."

Q. "Why are you afraid of them?"

A. "Hi-jackers and Jack the Ripper have guns or knives on them . . . Angel Dust messes up your head. Rapists can force you to make sex."

Q. "How about girls?"

A. "Girls? Well, I say 'no' but if you really want to know . . . 'yes'"

The developmental approach to school-age day care that I have been promoting is not the only approach. There is room for contraries, as Robert Frost so beautifully expressed in "West-Running Brook":

> What does it think it's doing running West
> When all the other country brooks flow East to reach the ocean?
> It must be the brook can trust itself and go by contraries.[3]

We do not have to feel inadequate or anxious or angry or guilty because our efforts as child-care staff are not always 100%, because we cannot always solve existing problems and know what to do. There is a story of a lion who kept asking each animal he met, "Who's the bravest animal in the jungle?" Each animal would answer, "You are, oh mighty lion." Finally he came to an elephant and asked him the same question, whereupon the elephant picked him up, stamped on him and threw him about.

The lion, groggy, shook his head and said, "Just because you didn't know the answer, you didn't need to get so mad about it." I admit that I too don't know all the answers, but I am having fun trying to learn answers as I live and work and learn with the children. I hope you are too.

Footnotes

1. Child Care and Development Services. Report of the Commission to Formulate a State Plan for Child Care and Development Services in California. California State Department of Education, 1978, pp. 4-5.
2. Cohen, Donald J., ed., Serving School Age Children. Washington, D.C.: OCD/DHEW, 1972.
3. In Hall, Donald, The Pleasures of Poetry. Harper & Row, New York, 1971.

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*Documents with ED numbers are available through the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) in microfiche and paper copy, unless otherwise noted. (For information on obtaining ERIC documents, in libraries or by mail, see page 104.) Some of these documents are also available from their original source.

Part II: ISSUES IN SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE

Some Ingredients of Effective School-Age Child Care

Judith Rosen

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Day care for the school-age child means different things to different people. For those who do not have children or do not need day care, it often means a way to keep the child of working parents from milling around the school in the morning or from getting into trouble in the afternoon. For many parents and educators it means some way of monitoring the child's activities, some way of making sure the child doesn't get hurt, or hurt others, or damage property before the parent gets home from work. For early childhood professionals (and there doesn't seem to be a word or phrase commonly accepted for those of us who provide day care for the school-age child), it means a planned program in a well-equipped, comfortable and safe setting that will allow the child to create, to explore and to choose stimulating and diverse activities with other children under the guidance of trained, competent and caring adults. For some school officials and parents, it presents an opportunity to meet a community need by using school buildings which might otherwise be closed due to declining enrollment.

I have been asked to discuss some of the public policy issues and practices that we have found to be instrumental in providing school-age day care. First of all, let me say that at present school-age day care is increasingly receiving wide support from the public. (In the six years that we have provided this service, our programs have grown from eight to twenty-six and we now provide care for handicapped children ages five to twenty-one.) I believe that public support will continue to grow. Below, I have listed a number of factors which allow us to continue to provide what we hope is high quality day care for the school-age child within the public sector.

1. The Political Power of Parents. While we all know the statistics show a phenomenal growth in the percentage of working mothers, statistics do not vote. Parents vote, and politicians listen to voters. School-age day care is winning support from once reluctant locally-elected officials because they are responding to their constituents. In our county (a large suburban-urban area with a population of over 600,000), placing extended day care directly under the control of the County Supervisors almost guarantees its existence and growth. This year the elected officials enthusiastically agreed to fund five additional programs. I no longer have to convince politicians with statistics, stories of neglected children, or child development principles. The parents are doing the convincing.

2. Widespread Need, Widespread Access. Day care is not a poverty program. Parents who need day care come from all social and economic backgrounds. There is much more community support for day care when it is perceived as a program to serve all families, not just the traditional low income families. Admittance to our program is on a first-come, first-served basis, and low income families pay on a sliding fee scale. All other families pay the full fee. Since the parents are paying for the service, they feel entitled to it.

3. Use of Available Space. Because many school systems are facing rapidly declining enrollments, space to house day care programs is becoming available within the schools. While the school system may not want to administer day care (for fear it would inflate the school budget), many communities find publically assisted day care very attractive. It provides a good reason for not closing down the neighborhood school.

4. A Child Development Orientation. Many people, including parents, elected officials and administrators, may consider day care as only a custodial service. It is, however, very important -- both for the welfare of the children and for the success of the program--that it be structured from the beginning as a child development program. Children who have been in school all day and must stay in the same building until 6:30 in the evening need special attention. They need a comfortable room with a space they can call their own. They need to use the gyms, libraries, and playing fields. They need adults who aren't too busy to talk to them. They need adults who know how to plan interesting activities and how to help children plan for themselves. They need nutritious snacks they can help prepare for themselves, and they need materials and equipment to carry out their ideas. Therefore, those responsible for the program should have a solid professional background, either through education or relevant experience or both.

While parents may not at first demand a professionally run program, once they experience it they will help to make sure that the quality is not reduced. It is hard to change the character of a program after it has been accepted and established. Parents who have been led to expect only custodial care will accept it. However, if their children have been in a child-centered, stimulating program, they will not settle for less.

This leads me to my last point. There is very little training, either academic or otherwise, for the school-age day care teacher and it is very difficult to find persons who have had academic training or work experience in this area. This conference should be a help in that direction.

As both the need for and the number of school-age day care programs grow, we will experience even more than we do now the lack of appropriately trained staff. Our program has an extensive orientation and staff development component, but it is not enough. A major challenge remains to provide the appropriate education for those who plan to become extended day care teachers and supervisors.

Starting Programs: Critical Elements and Stumbling Blocks. The Experience of a Parent-Run Program in the Public Schools

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In Brookline, Massachusetts, the need for day care for school-age children has been met by the collaborative efforts of parent groups and public school officials. Over a seven year period, from 1972 to the present, a relationship has been established between these two groups, which traditionally have had difficulty in working together. This relationship has allowed parent groups in elementary schools to develop after-school programs in public school space provided and maintained by the school system, which was willing to forego administrative and programmatic control over the programs. Parent-run day care programs (called "Extended Day") now exist in all eight Brookline elementary schools. A new town-wide program was established in 1978 to serve children from third to sixth grade who required a more varied and flexible setting. Approximately 500 children are enrolled in all programs.

The Brookline model is useful to study for two reasons. First, the organizing and negotiating process which brought parents and school officials together under the aegis of the elected school committee can be considered as an example of a successful political and educative process for both groups. Second, the Brookline programs can be seen as an interesting alternative to proposed public school prime sponsorship of day care, a role which continues to be controversial.[1]

While this description may be somewhat idiosyncratic due to the unusual nature of the community of Brookline, with its high degree of community participation in decision-making, in recent months a number of similar efforts have begun in cities and towns across the country. Recognition of elements common to the organizing processes in starting day care programs may be useful in establishing partnerships other than the parent/public school model outlined here.

Day care for school-age children is not yet widely available in Massachusetts. Pre-school day care, although insufficient to meet current demand, is in relatively greater supply than programs for the school-age child. While ample documentation exists on the risks faced by young children who do not have adequate supervision after school, conventional wisdom has it that once a child is of school age, he or she can manage to function alone. With rapid changes in the working patterns of women with children, increasing numbers of school-age children become "latch-key"

kids, faced with the questionable choice of watching television all day or of making it on "the street" until their parents come home from work.? Also, income eligibility guidelines restrict families whose incomes are slightly over Title XX figures from participation in the few centers under contract with the Department of Public Welfare. Some private centers provide after-school services, but transportation and overhead costs are reflected in high tuition rates, further prohibiting many families from enrolling children.

The awareness of limited facilities for school-age children, coupled with a concrete need for service, motivated a parent group in a Brookline school to design an after-school program accessible to their children. Originally convened by the school principal, this first group of working parents (mostly mothers) requested and won School Committee approval to incorporate as a non-profit organization. The group negotiated for Department of Public Welfare (Title XX) funds for a small number of children, and planned their program's expenses based on tuitions averaging $25/week per child. (The Department of Public Welfare currently funds approximately 30 children in four of the programs.)

The School Committee gave its formal approval for use of school space based on the precedent for "private" use of public school buildings set by a local music school, which had operated for several years in the elementary schools. Also, the Committee supported the concept of community use of the public schools. Concurrent with the early organizational period of the after-school programs, a new elementary school was planned and built and several others were slated for renovation. Although most School Committee members supported the rationale for the after-school programs, official sanction was at that time primarily a pragmatic act, built on the idea that the more new or renovated buildings are used, the easier it is to sell a building program to the public. The actual dollar commitment of the school system was small; all costs except for one hour of custodial time were funded by parent tuition and welfare vendor payments. Further, school enrollments across the country were beginning to decline. Consequently, as each new after-school program was formed in subsequent years, the School Committee and staff recognized the advantage of a social service program which served to attract new families to a community dominated by a growing number of elderly residents.

Attitudes toward the programs varied among some of the school personnel. Some concern surfaced that the schools should not be institutions designed to "replace" the family, that children in day care had problems, that their family situations were atypical. A small group of kindergarten teachers saw children who attended day care as being inattentive, tired, and causing behavior problems in the other, "non-day-care" children at school. Although negative attitudes such as these were not widespread, the underlying hostility had both emotional and practical effects on the programs. Parents felt uncomfortable with the children's regular classroom teachers because of a fear of a subtle "tracking" of their children; after-school program staff felt at times isolated and excluded from the school as a whole. Requests by program staff for use of specialized areas in the school buildings (shop, homemaking, art, etc.) were often denied or so controlled by regulations and boundaries that sharing of areas and equip-

ment was all but impossible. As more parent groups formed to explore child care needs with the intent to replicate the early efforts, other problems began to hinder the growth of additional programs. Since no state licensing standards existed for after-school programs, the local Health Department, a delegated licensing body, undertook to "license" the programs. Along with certain stipulated rules such as the number of square feet per child, additional building and zoning code regulations were applied.

In the early years other problems arose. One program expanded into a part of the school building considered to be in a "residential" zone of the town, after spending the previous year in the front half of the school, in a "commercial" zone. After the move, the program staff were informed by officials that the parent group must apply for a special zoning permit, requiring blueprints and a $500.00 fee. It was at this point that the School Committee officially placed the programs under the umbrella of the school system. This exempted the programs from licensing requirements which were clearly impossible to meet, and also demonstrated a continuing commitment to the programs by the School Committee. Once this support was made concrete, others, such as teachers, principals, and school department administrators, acknowledged the program as a fait accompli.

Throughout the events described above, several critical elements were evident: documentation, persuasion, and collaboration. These important steps must be taken in order to start programs in community facilities which may not be predisposed to house such services.

Documentation. Evidence of the need for school-age child care can be gathered from parents through school-by-school surveys, to provide a strong indication of potential participation in a program. Using data from the surveys, the organizing group can develop proposals for School Committee approval. The proposals outline the goals and scope of the proposed programs and provide concrete information to those charged with making decisions about the use of school space; they are especially useful if they anticipate a number of serious questions of concern to Committee members (school liability for children and staff; insurance, health and safety provisions; budget plans; staffing patterns, etc.). Presentation of the proposals to the School Committee may involve audio-visual aids, enrollment charts, or other supporting material.

Persuasion. In communities where programs are starting up, parents typically have to persuade school boards and administrators of the value of school-age day care based in the public schools. The value of day care to the community, beyond the simple provision of child care to children of working parents, can be emphasized. In this regard, support from community groups and political leaders may be an important influence on elected school board members. Should school enrollments be declining, community leaders may be very interested in developing new ways to use school space and to attract young families to the community. Day care is one such incentive.

The availability of financial support from outside sources is also a persuasive tool. For example, a Community Development grant (HUD) for start-up costs, a CETA contract for staff, and Title XX funds for eligible families can buttress the base of a self-supported program.

Space may be the only contribution that public schools are willing to make to school-age child care programs, but negotiation for additional in-kind contributions should be considered by the petitioning group. Such contributions might include custodial services (collective bargaining agreements may already stipulate late afternoon hours), utilities, extended use of school transportation, and the opportunity to purchase equipment and supplies in bulk along with school system orders. The Brookline system provides space, utilities, and some custodial service.

Collaboration. Any partnership requires a high degree of collaboration between the partners. In the Brookline experience, two School Committee members (both women, one a working mother of school-age children) worked with parents to clarify the role of each partner. Guidelines or regulations governing the use of school space and spelling out areas of responsibility, were written collaboratively by school staff and parents. It should also be noted at this point that the school principal's role is crucial in introducing the program to regular school faculty and staff. The principal's early support sets the tone for cooperation by other faculty and staff members who may not be so enthusiastic about sharing "their" school.

Parent-administered programs such as the Brookline model tend to solve at least one of the dilemmas currently faced by many school systems. Increasingly, the schools are asked to take on a social service role for families and children, a role which many systems are unwilling or unable to assume. Public school support of programs such as Brookline's allows the system to offer services without a large commitment of finances or staff. In turn, programs designed by the parents who use them keep costs relatively low, provide stable services, and involve parents in providing good quality care for their children.

Footnotes

1. See Day Care and the Public Schools. Levine, James, Education Development Center, Inc., 55 Chapel Street, Newton, Massachusetts, 02160. 1978.

2. Bergstrom, Joan; Dreher, Donna. "Day Care for the School-Age Child," from The Evaluation of Existing Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements. (ED 156 349, 139 pp.).

Staff Development: Models and Roadblocks

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What exactly is staff development? The answer that comes first to mind is training, particularly training which expands a staff person's teaching skills. While training must be recognized as an important part of staff development, it is only one component of a larger concept that encompasses personal and professional development through a variety of means. The breadth of this concept became clear to me recently, when I conducted an informal survey of the staff of school-age programs in the Boston area. Only a few staff members defined staff development simply as training. Most offered a global definition which embraced aspects of staff relations, communications, personal growth, and interactions with parents, children, and community. Every aspect of child care operations was in fact viewed as a potential topic for staff development.

However, while all the teachers and directors interviewed expressed the belief that a dedicated, enthusiastic, creative and supportive staff was the key factor in producing a high quality school-age child care program, few had developed any formal or systematic arrangements for conducting or evaluating staff development and progress. In fact, in most of the programs, particularly the smaller and more recently established ones, staff development was reported to be casual and informal. Many of the directors commented that it occurred more as a by-product of other activities than as anything planned.

Those who seek to design and implement staff development efforts will find that the research available is limited and seldom directed to the needs of a school-age child care program. School-age day care is a new and developing profession with few academic studies or training resources to support it. Most of the relevant material and information on this topic is specific to other types of child care programs, particularly pre-school, residential, institutional and hospital child care. Consequently, much of the available information is useful only insofar as it can be adapted to the environment of the school-age child care program.

We can, of course, consider this situation from a more positive point of view. The novice status of our profession makes possible -- indeed encourages -- creative and innovative approaches to planning and testing which are born of the experiences, ideas and resources of the people currently involved in the provision of this service.

Some of the approaches being used in school-age programs, and the advantages and problems they involve, are described below.

A Definition of Staff Development

Staff development, broadly defined, is the dynamic process of personal and professional growth by which staff members, individually and collectively, acquire new skills and knowledge of themselves, one another, their clients and their profession. This knowledge, when directed and applied, will improve the work environment, staff relations and the quality of the child care service.

Though this definition appears formal and theoretical, it is based on a very practical goal: to improve the quality and delivery of services to the child. It emphasizes that learning and development affect the staff in both a personal and professional way. It reflects the idea that learning may occur on an individual or collective level, depending upon how new information is introduced.

A staff, of course, is comprised of individuals at varying stages of personal and professional development and with various talents. These individuals are drawn together by a common concern for the goals and activities of school-age child care. The assumption of this basic common goal is fundamental to any staff development effort.

The Role of the Leader

The preceding definition of staff development demands a type of leader who can channel the spirit and talents of each individual staff person into a cooperatively functioning team. By demonstrating respect for each of the staff members, impartially assessing their strengths and weaknesses, and soliciting their participation, opinions and ideas, the team leader is able to establish the dialogue and respect that are the foundations for staff development.

Furthermore, by granting appropriate autonomy to the staff to develop new and exciting approaches to the education and care of the children, the team leader demonstrates that he or she truly respects the staff person as a valuable professional member of the team. With this type of team spirit, a group leader is able to encourage the staff to assess their own progress and to recognize for themselves the need for continuing self improvement and staff development.

Thus a truly effective leader will recognize that his or her supervisory responsibility includes not only providing guidance, support and direction to the staff, but also the responsibility of insuring that communications and respect amongst staff members is on-going as they advance toward their common goal of good quality child care.

Effective leadership may prove difficult for directors and head teachers in school-age child care programs, for a number of reasons. First, very few directors have had specific training in school-age child care, and many feel that a lack of special academic training diminishes their "authority" and "expertise." This problem may be compounded by the fact that most directors are relatively new on the job. Few have had more than one or two years' experience as directors or supervisors. Very often, another source of difficulty is the similarity in ages between the director and the

staff. While this may encourage bonds of friendship between them, it may also lead to role conflict for the director. A final difficulty is the fact that many directors double as head teachers and co-workers in the classroom. These directors often feel additional pressures to demonstrate for their staff the "best" school-age teacher role model possible.

Faced with these difficulties, how can a director/supervisor effectively and confidently assume the responsibilities of staff development? From our local survey, three strategies emerge for reducing the conflicts inherent in the role.

Forming Associations. The first option involves organizing school-age child care programs in a community to form associations and support groups. Collectively, these programs may be financially able to support and design training sessions which address both the common and the individual concerns of several local school-age programs. In some instances, these associations have been able to offer courses at minimal costs, occasionally for college credit, by calling upon local, state and federal children's agencies for additional financial, political, educational and organizational assistance. For example, some agencies and colleges offering Title XX training classes have been willing to provide courses geared to school-age child care issues. This has not been easy, however. As noted earlier, not only is there a dearth of school-age child care information, but there are relatively few colleges and equally few resource persons familiar with school-age concerns.

Some associations, therefore, have called upon their members to lead mini-workshops on subjects or activities in which they are especially talented or well trained. Teachers, directors, parents, and community resource persons have offered workshops, each from two to three hours long on a bi-monthly basis. Some topics have included first aid training, CPR, photography, science for the school-age child, drug and alcohol abuse, child abuse, international cooking, and the role of teachers in rearing the school-age child. Such workshops help to support professional development in this field from within the ranks of practitioners.

Besides addressing training issues, day care associations and support groups have also dealt with staff relation concerns. When staff from many programs are involved, issues such as administrative and teaching roles, program obligations, supervision, evaluation and personnel heirarchy can be discussed in a professional, supportive and non-threatening environment. By joining such forums, program staff have discovered that other programs face similar problems and that together they can benefit from their mutual support and experience.

Encouraging Staff Communications. The second approach to resolving conflicts in the leadership role is to encourage direct, frank and honest discussions of issues between the director/head teacher and the staff. By airing their concerns, real or imagined, and by sharing the ways in which they affect different individuals, the staff can often come to respect and understand each other better. Ongoing, open communication is extremely important. For this reason, directors who are primarily administrators, with limited amounts of time to spend in the classroom, should schedule

frequent individual conferences with each staff member. The agenda for these conferences may be open. Sometimes specific evaluations and comments on performance are a chief priority. At other times a teacher's perspective on how things are proceeding in the classroom may head the list. Sometimes, just personal discussion of each other's interests, goals and experiences is the most valuable use of the time.

Hiring Consultants. The third option for reducing dependence on the leader involves turning to an outside consultant or mediator. Many school-age child care programs, particularly larger programs or those associated with larger social service agencies, employ staff relations specialists and/or social psychologists as consultants. If the staff relations person is respected, trained in communication techniques, and able to function as a third party mediator, this arrangement can foster discussions in a constructive, non-threatening fashion which binds, rather than separates, the staff. Because of his or her experience and third-party perspective, such a mediator often can suggest alternatives previously overlooked or not fully considered. Perhaps the most important factor here is that this person be someone who is respected and trusted by all the parties involved.

The Importance of Clear Expectations

Staff development efforts -- particularly training efforts -- are commonly based on staff evaluations (whether formal or informal). Yet many school-age programs operate without written progress reports, work evaluations, standards and job descriptions. This can place both the supervisors and the staff in a tenuous position. Without objective guidelines, there is no common base for evaluation. All school-age child care programs, whether they consist of one, two or twenty-two staff members, should provide written job descriptions, policies and evaluations for each staff person. These written policies serve as an objective basis for employment contracts; they also should be subject to revision or amendment as demanded by time, experience, and staff suggestion.

When employment expectations are made clear, agreed upon in the beginning, and updated by the staff, many potential staff relations problems can be avoided. By sharing and discussing with one another their teaching goals, expectations, and commitments, the staff and administration can plan and develop an inservice education program which supports these expectations. The sooner the staff members know and agree to these expectations, the better and more effective the training is likely to be.

Inservice Education

In school-age programs, most staff development and training efforts take the form of informal discussions and opportunities to express personal feelings, fears, and observations. Formal staff development efforts generally include on-the-job training and supervision supplemented by inservice education. Associations and workshops, as noted earlier, may supplement or stimulate the course of inservice education. They should not, however, be seen as substitutes for it. Indeed, inservice education offers the most viable and flexible opportunity for staff training since it deals with the concerns and issues specifically pertinent to the program and staff.

Staff meetings appear to be the most common arena for providing in-service education as well as for setting priorities and discussing and evaluating program operations. Supportive supervision, timely personal evaluation and cooperative team-teaching appear to be the most common means of helping staff members to put this education into effective action.

Finding the time for inservice education and staff meetings is a common problem for school-age programs. This is particularly true for the newer programs, which generally have to struggle every minute just to keep the program operating. For some programs, evening staff meetings held either at the center or at a staff member's home with a pot-luck dinner are a workable solution. Other programs hold staff meetings before the children arrive, although this can prove difficult for those staff members who need to supplement their part-time salaries by holding additional jobs in the mornings.

Some programs, in an effort to solve this problem, have gone so far as to extend their services to include preschool and/or kindergarten child care. This expansion enables the programs to offer their staff additional work hours and correspondingly higher salaries. In addition, the extended hours and preschool service permit these programs to hold staff meetings and inservice education classes during nap or rest period when only one or two people are necessary to supervise the nap room. Some programs recruit a volunteer to cover this short period of time while others have developed a system for rotating coverage by staff members.

Responsibility for leading staff meetings may be shared in various ways. In some programs, the staff first meet collectively to define the topics of concern; then, on a rotating basis, individual staff members assume the responsibility of researching a specific issue and presenting their findings to the rest of the staff. In other programs, consultants and community professionals are invited to introduce variety to staff meetings, as well as to generate excitement and expand learning. Larger child care programs often appoint educational coordinators to design and lead classes on current child care issues. Options such as these foster creative individual participation, extend opportunity for sharing and communications, permit opportunity for leadership training and focus on issues of immediate and personal concern.

Staff at many programs suggest that meetings should be balanced in content by scheduling a certain segment of time (perhaps one half hour) for discussing a predetermined general issue in school-age child care, while devoting the remainder of the meeting to discussions of individual children's needs or problems, staff relations, and programming. All staff with whom we have spoken agree that staff meetings are essential and should be held at least once a week for a minimum of 1½ hours. All agreed that staff should be paid for this time.

The ability to mold a staff development program to the characteristics of an individual child-care program is an important key to its success. Any program which provides staff members with opportunities for personal growth and gains in knowledge and skills, and which helps to improve the quality of child care services, is well on the way to success.

Parents and Staff: Sharing Program Decisions About "Their" Children*

Barbara Schram

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To most fully understand this paper, the reader should know that I view the problems and challenges of parent staff interaction from a variety of often conflicting perspectives. For several years I was a human service professional supervising after-school programs for children at a large urban YMCA. At another time in my career I was a parent organizer assisting lay groups to start their own (often maverick) child care centers. My latest role has been as a mother of a preschooler who attends a parent/staff cooperative. Wearing several hats has given me the advantage of comparing theory with the realities of both parenthood and teaching. It has also left me vastly confused and profoundly frustrated by the feeling that viable parent/staff partnerships are almost unattainable.

Despite the problems, however, I remain committed to the belief that good quality child care must include a genuine, collegial relationship between home and center. Thus, stating my frustration along with my conviction, I invite the reader to struggle with me to understand more clearly the assumptions, goals, obstacles and techniques of such a participatory process.

Assumptions

Two key assumptions undergird my absolute commitment to the concept of a parent/staff child care team. The first is that a major task of childhood -- especially in this transitional culture -- is to sort out the complexities of social relationships, values, attitudes, and feelings towards a diverse set of emotionally charged personal and social issues. Children constantly strive to understand love, war, sexuality, race, religion, disability, ownership, beauty, and the like. No experience in the young child's life is really free of this struggle. Even the most trivial seeming activity is often a vital expression of a cultural imperative or a contradiction. In Urie Bronfenbrenner's analysis of child care centers in the USSR and USA,[1] this socio-political content of child's play is made unusually clear. In a similar comparison of US centers to those in China, Ruth Sidel[2] sharply calls our attention to this often overlooked function of the children's program.

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*Much of this paper has been adapted from a chapter by B. Schram and M. Seltzer submitted for publication to the "Massachusetts Child Care Center Management Manual," Roger Neugebauer, Editor.

The second assumption flowing from the first is that a child, attempting to sort out all these complex issues on the path to adulthood, will fare a great deal better if the key caregivers in his or her life are moving in complementary (though not necessarily identical) directions. Given the enormous differences in class and ethnicity of our population, this is not always an easy task. In my child's day care center, for example, the death of one of his classmates dramatically showed us all the great need we had for two-way communication. Welded together by their concern that the children deal openly with this traumatic experience, parents and staff stayed in daily communication, sharing what they had explained to the children and pooling observations of how different youngsters were reacting. The children were exposed to a variety of explanations of death, since there could be no complete agreement, but the adults supported each others' explanations and cleared up a great many distortions. This type of respectful two-way communication leads to the fulfillment of several goals for both parents and teachers.

The Purposes of Two-Way Communication

1. Both parents and staff can better understand the full range of a child's reactions by being aware of significant events in the child's life in the dual settings of home and center. Often, each separate sphere in a child's life reveals only one aspect of feelings. As a child sorts out the feelings aroused by the birth of a sibling, or a separation from a loved one, or stories of war and accidents, or instances of bigotry, parents and staff get helpful clues as to what is happening and what kind of help is needed from the significant adults in the child's life. This "sorting out" may occur in making a phone call to grandma or watching a puppet play at school. If adults in both settings can share the insights they receive from witnessing it, they all are helped to understand the child.

2. After more fully understanding how a child is dealing with issues, the team members -- parents and teachers -- share data and utilize their own particular roles to help the child work out some of the issues that defy easy solution. The nuclear family has tended to rob children of the panoply of significant adults that used to be available to them to meet differing needs. The staff member in a child care program can often replace those aunts and uncles who bring caring, but a certain amount of emotional distance, to the child's efforts. Similarly, when life at the program is not as congenial as it might be for a particular child, the parents, alerted to the problems, can provide a counterpoise and support the child in solving the problem.

3. Decisions about the child's life or activities that need to be made at the center or in the home can be built on the fullest possible information and can be interpreted by the adults in both spheres. Whereas parent/staff communication implies shared decision making in as many areas as possible, there are certain issues which must be decided by staff or parents alone. These decisions are most likely to be in the child's best interest, however, if they are based on information from all the significant adults in the child's life -- not just the ones who are making the decisions. Too often in this society, parents and teachers blame each other for children's failures. Yet the real failure is the lack of institutional support for shared decision making. Recent social legislation such as the

poverty act and the new special education act have recognized this false compartmentalizing of the child's life and have mandated that home and school collaborate. Child care programs have a unique chance to begin cooperation with the home that will set a tone for parents' future dealings with public school personnel.

Given the convincing arguments for parent/staff communication, why does it so rarely seem to happen? I believe that the soil in which many child care programs grow is basically infertile and the environment often hostile to this type of partnership. Thus, the frustration I spoke of earlier in the paper occurs. Before one can talk about techniques to enhance communication one must look honestly at barriers. Once identified, some of these are relatively easily resolved. Others, especially those generated by the socio-political system in whch we all struggle to survive, may remain enigmas. However, recognizing these barriers and becoming sensitive to them can equip a parent/staff group to deal with some and defuse others. Knowing the dimensions of the task, we may be more generous in counting our successes.

Barriers to Parent/Staff Interaction

1. Differences in race and class among staff and parents. A large proportion of out-of-home child care is provided to low income people (mostly mothers) under government funding. Several consequences flow from that arrangement. First, most state and federal funding policies require parents to prove either poverty or extreme physical or emotional hardship to qualify for subsidized child care. At the same time, the staff group is often recruited from college educated young persons who reside outside the community. Frequently, the staff, having the privileges of a "higher socio-economic status," have scant knowledge of the cultural patterns, life styles or child rearing practices of the parent group. Lack of knowledge may lead to prejudice. The professional jargon of child care may further widen the gap between parents and staff.

In many publicly funded programs, parents are viewed as cases or clients. It is assumed that there are serious problems in the home and that social workers or child development experts are needed to teach parenting skills. Although there is value in offering parents emotional and educational support, the assumption that staff have the "answers" to raising happy and healthy children is distancing at the least and profoundly untrue.

From the parent's vantage point, there may be assumptions that the higher socio-economic status and education of the teachers gives them a monopoly on information about the child and thus the right to make all the decisions. Familiar with the work of social welfare agents in many other parts of their lives, parents -- especially those who are poor and in the minority groups -- are often timid in expressing their feelings and play an acquiescent game.

2. Attitudes about the commitment of parents who choose day care. Even when differences in the class and race of the parent and staff groups are not significant, some staff members may unconsciously make negative judgments about those parents who choose day care even though they "do not have to work for the money." This is not surprising since many have

been taught, by some leading child development experts, that one-to-one mothering at home is still the superior method of child rearing during the early years. Accordingly, many staff members make the assumption that mothers who use day care are inadequate parents because they are not sufficiently interested in mothering. Such people make poor partners in the decision-making process!

3. Attitudes towards the role of parents. Added to some of the negative attitudes about "day care parents" are the ambivalent societal attitudes towards the role of parents. On the one hand, our psychoanalytic legacy places parents at the center of the child's life: the parent is the cause and source of all of the child's behavior. On the other hand, parents are often perceived as unfit. They are thought to be unable to be objective about the needs of their own children. Even if they have professional backgrounds that include child development insights, they are seen as unable to apply them in instances in which their own children are directly involved, as in a classroom situation. On the other hand, if they have little formal education it is assumed they cannot understand the complexities of child development. In the Head Start model, as in many of the parent education models, parents are seen as people to be taught, helped and oriented to child rearing. Rarely are they accepted as collaborators.

4. Attitudes towards child care personnel. The "just a mother" syndrome in society meets its match with "just a day care teacher." In the eyes of society, child care personnel are often thought of as not much more than "babysitters." In the hierarchy of educational roles early childhood education is placed at the very bottom of the status ladder. With each rung up the ladder from preschool teacher to graduate school professor, there is a corresponding increase in prestige, societal respect and fringe benefits, as well as in the ratio of males to females.

Many child care staff struggle against their "benevolent custodian" role and may subtly displace their feelings of rage onto the parents who are, after all, representatives of the general public as well.

5. Lack of societal support for day care services. Unquestionably, child care personnel suffer not only from low public status but even more dramatically from difficult working conditions and demanding work, coupled with small monetary rewards. The anger generated by this patently inequitable situation can often spill over into attitudes towards parent participation. This is especially so in private or cooperative programs. Here the parents, although perhaps paying a maximum percentage of their weekly salary, still offer inadequate financial rewards to staff.

In a set of relationships that should optimally be cooperative, an adversary stance can often creep in, especially at budget time when salaries and tuitions are being determined. Caught in a bind created by the larger society's lack of support for child care, parents and staff often play out a drama of borrowing from Peter to pay Paul. The result is all around discontent. At the best of times, parents and staff join together to lobby for more public funding for tax credits or other progressive child care legislation. But at the worst of times the feelings of being exploited can surface in both groups, causing miscommunication.

6. Lack of time to make shared decisions. Not having enough time is often given as a facile excuse for lack of parental involvement in preschool

or after-school programs. Obviously, if most parents are working or have burdensome responsibilities time is at a premium. If staff must work at other jobs their time is very tight also. In actuality, a program is more complicated and sometimes less efficient when parents are actively involved in decision making. Committee meetings, phone surveys, and so on, lead to many delays as well as to many vetoes of staff wishes.

Night meetings become inevitable if genuine parent/staff decision making is desired. This allocation of time is a problem for which there are few solutions other than a careful minimizing of meetings and increased attempts to get business done by phone, mail surveys, and the like.

When parents drift into a "let-the-staff-do-it because they seem to have the time and expertise" frame of mind, mutual participation shrivels up. If the staff wait for parents and the work does not get done there is much justified anger among and between the two groups.

7. The tendency of the staff to monopolize the information needed to make decisions. This monopoly of information is a problem in all programs. It is particularly acute when the staff has more education or training than the parents. Parents need all the background information if they are to engage in genuine decision making processes. Providing that information, however, is not only hard to do but also time consuming, and it requires a staff genuinely committed to the process. It is easy to drift into a situation where staff and director, because they have the expertise and are on site, make most of the decisions without parents ever being involved.

8. The youth and non-parent status of many child care teachers. Child care personnel are frequently young women who do not have children. This may make it difficult for them to separate the theoretical aspects of child development from the real life situation of parenting. As they spend many hours a day with young children, staff members often come to love and to understand children in a way that is different from that of the parents. At times the transient (though intense) nature of their involvement can leave the staff feeling frustrated with home situations that they see as counterproductive. Often staff experience vague feelings of competition and ambivalence in their dealings with parents. On their part, parents may find it hard to relate to the insights or advice of teachers whom they perceive as outsiders to parenting.

Techniques To Enhance Parent/Staff Interaction

Recognizing the emotional and institutional barriers that can hinder parent/staff decision making is the first challenge any child care group must face. But even after these roadblocks have been minimized or removed, shared decision making still may not happen unless an appropriate "democracy mechanism" is built. This mechanism is constructed from at least seven key ingredients.

1. An articulated and mutually accepted belief in the absolute value of broad-based participation in early childhood education or child care programs. Since shared decision making can often be a frustrating process, the belief that it is the only way a child care program should be run is absolutely essential. This belief has to be strong enough to buoy up spirits when only a few members attend a key meeting, when staff and parents argue endlessly over the same points, when a few strong people

monopolize discussions of necessary repairs and when new programs cannot be started until everyone has been heard from. This belief must be built on the assumption that parents (even if they falter, bog down, or abdicate) have the capacity and right to make decisions about the lives of their young children. The recognition that conflict, openly aired and worked on, can be enriching to a group, buttresses this belief. So too does a sense of humor, along with patience and capacity to take risks. Essentially, the effort must always be to improve the mechanisms of participation rather than the motivation and character of the non-participators.

It is especially important that new staff and parents know precisely what they are getting into when they start working in a participatory program. A contract that honestly spells out extra work hours, time for home visits or classroom observations, and number of anticipated evening meetings may scare off some people but is definitely for the best.

2. A set of guidelines that articulate the formal decision making procedures. Although by-laws, personnel practices, job descriptions and staff and parent contracts may appear needlessly bureaucratic, in the long run they are vital. Nothing dooms a center to confusion and tension as much as vague generalities about who does what and how it should be done. In hiring, for example, everyone needs to know who will recruit and interview applicants, and which body -- the overall membership, classroom parents and staff, or a specially delegated committee -- will make the final selection.

Even though parent-staff relationships may be very cordial when the program starts, when a dispute arises everyone needs to know exactly what the guidelines and regulations are: for example, how much maternity leave staff are entitled to and what the processes of staff evaluation will be.

Most importantly, parents and staff need to have a format by which they can give and take criticism and feedback. A formal mechanism can help to avoid the tyrannies of the grapevine and kangaroo court. This is especially important as the program expands and is forced to move from decisions made by the whole to decisions made by committees and individuals with delegated responsibilities.

Formal guidelines also protect shared decision making when a child care program is financed or given in-kind support from another, larger institution. Time and again small parent groups are digested whole by school systems, universities or social agencies that push them to adopt their standardized hiring criteria, holiday schedules and educational or political biases. Parents and staff are not likely to give up an evening for a program meeting if they know that all the key decisions have already been made by people far removed from the lives of the familes and staff of the program.

Finally, it is only through thrashing out and committing to paper the actual "how-we-will-do-its" that program philosophy and policies become real to everyone. If this process is accomplished in the life of a program, parents and staff can identify both issues that they agree on and potential "hot potatoes." If too many irreconcilable differences become evident it may be that this group has little chance of working together effectively.

3. Decision-making structures that fit the size of the program and the styles of its members. Since our society offers few structual alternatives to hierarchy, it is a challenge to devise broad-based participatory structures. Between the traditional director-run nursery school and the totally collective ethos of counter-culture groups, there lies an array of viable ways to hold meetings, solicit feedback and find roles for every member.

Decisions can be made in a wide variety of ways. Bulletin boards and telephone polls often avoid time consuming meetings. Short meetings can be held at members' homes or at pick-up and drop-off times. Some decisions can be delegated to staff and some to the parents and staff of one classroom; others require whole program involvement. Decisions delegated to different groups should not be done on the basis of their importance, but rather on the skills, time, convenience, and self-interest of the people involved. With careful thought, it is possible to reach virtually every parent when key decisions, such as hiring and firing, setting tuition rates, or making major curriculum shifts, are to be made. Some issues, such as designing a playground or coordinating a fundraising event, can be delegated to ad hoc groups.

Organizational structures, too, need to be assessed and redesigned as the program shifts in size, composition, and funding base. There is no one right way to share decision making; staff and parents need to realize that in their program, as in the world at large, some people have the skills, energy and interest to do organizational tasks while others dislike them and will face them with dread. It should also be recognized that dissatisfaction and desire for change are endemic in participatory programs. These must be interpreted as the signs of healthy experimentation.

4. The facts and knowledge needed to make sound decisions. In traditional, hierarchically organized programs, professional staff often monopolize most of the basic information needed to make decisions. This occurs in part out of happenstance, but often lack of confidence in parents' interest or capacity to work within the program is a contributing factor. The same situation can also arise in programs committed to shared decision making unless careful thought is given to dissemination of information.

Finding ways to transfer information from staff to parents requires a lot of energy. Most programs rely on frequent newsletters, dittoed handouts in parents' mailboxes, and bulletin boards that are current, easy to read and strategically placed. Telephone trees and a "buddy" system for new parents can facilitate feedback. When audio or visual taping equipment is available it is invaluable for recording program meetings, staff meetings and children's programs. Recordings can be used to fill in absent members and to help people critically evaluate their own or their child's interactions.

During the decision making process it is often difficult to ensure that all members have the necessary information to visualize all the alternative courses of action. To give members only a yes or no alternative is often to give them no choice at all. For example, before a major program is initiated, members need to be informed about other ways the money might be used, how similar programs have handled a like situation, what the current thinking among child care "experts" is. Visits to other programs or interviews with parents, staff or professionals can provide enough con-

flicting data to encourage informed, albeit provocative, discussions. Professional consultants who work with a child care program must be encouraged (and even taught) how to present plans with alternatives spelled out. For example, professional architects, accountants, or psychologists should always articulate the pros and cons of any position they advocate.

While the barrage of dittoed papers in a child care program can become formidable, cutting back on the quantity entails the serious risk of excluding someone from the knowledge that may be a key to his or her ability to make appropriate decisions.

5. The skills needed to make sound decisions. When one recognizes that most parents and staff have had little previous experience in running an educational institution, it is apparent that most will need some practice. Even the most sophisticated members may not have the knack of running tight, well-paced meetings. Many parents and staff would profit from workshops on how to set up agendas, run small group discussions, and the like. Often local colleges or agencies offer personnel who will share the tricks-of-the-trade they have developed. Before parents systematically observe in a classroom or staff visit a home, a brief workshop might help them sharpen their techniques for processing what they will be seeing and experiencing. Similarly, for members who have never had the opportunity to hire personnel, role plays in which members practice questioning prospective staff may reveal useful insights.

Few of us, staff or parents, have had much experience in the giving and receiving of constructive criticism. Continuous skills training in this -- a few minutes at the end of each meeting or an occasional workshop in the rules and techniques of interpersonal communication -- can be of enormous benefit.

6. The resources needed to nurture the participatory mechanism. Given the complexities of shared decision making and widespread participation, nurturing these processes cannot be an afterthought. Whenever possible, time should be provided for staff to ascertain the skills and interests of the parents and to ensure that they are appropriately encouraged and used. For these reasons, a parent coordinator would benefit the program.

In addition to staff time, program budgets must reflect support for the participation process by providing small stipends for child care during meetings, translation of newsletters and notices (if there is a non-English speaking portion of the membership), and clerical tasks such as updating the program's parent/staff manual and running off dittoed notices. A coffee urn and a few easy chairs are well worth their purchase price as they encourage staff and parents to informally exchange information. These provisions are also a concrete, visual statement that parent/staff interaction is as important as what goes on within the program for the children.

7. Informal activities that help parents and staff interact. Programs that involve a high level of participation have discovered that the glue that holds the whole participatory mechanism together is an evident concern with the whole person and the whole family. The burden of endless business meetings must be balanced by more social occasions at which people come to know each other. A used clothing and toy exchange, food co-ops, babysitting pools, parent discussion groups, and picnics and other outings

commit parents and staff to each other so that the program becomes a genuinely supportive factor in their lives. The bulletin board on which housing and job notices are posted alongside announcements of welfare rights, group meetings, and neighborhood issues is another visual demonstration that child care is not just for the educational or custodial needs of children but that a good center is like a family with all its attendant joys and irritations.

Conclusion

Given the overwhelming nature of some of the obstacles to parent-staff decision making, as well as the complexity of implementing the strategies that seem to be effective, one could be left puzzling why any of us bother (and bother and bother). The only answer I can give is that this process is, in microcosm, the same struggle we face in every arena of our lives -- our jobs, our love relationships, our government. To opt out of the struggle is to accept an awesomely empty future.

Footnotes

1. Bronfenbrenner, Urie, Two Worlds of Childhood, USA and USSR, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1970.
2. Sidel, Ruth, Women and Childcare in China, Penguin Books, Inc., New York, 1973.

The Pitfalls of Managing Money: Common Problems and Practical Solutions

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Directors of school-age child care programs must be as effective at managing money as they are at caring for children. This lesson, had it not been learned too late, would have saved a local program. This program provided a wonderful environment for children -- the staff were creative and nurturing and the parents loved the experiences their children were having. However, the program was closed shortly after the original director left. Her replacement was outstanding with children, but she was totally unable to come to grips with managing money. After a few minor financial crises, the program was forced to close its doors.

Unfortunately, this scenario is not rare. Many school-age programs are plagued by faulty money management.

If child-care programs were generously funded, the consequences of ineffective money management would not be so severe. Most programs, however, are seriously underfunded and are barely able to pay their bills from month to month. The waste of a few dollars here and the loss of some expected income there can cause a program to delay or even cancel a pay day. If income and expenses are not carefully planned and controlled, a program can go out of business in a remarkably short period of time.

In helping programs with financial difficulties, I have noticed that a few problems occur time and again. Described below are the five most common of these money management pitfalls as well as some proposed remedies.

1. The Programmed-to-Fail Budget. In this situation the program adopts a budget for which projected income equals projected expenses. However, the budget will inevitably fail because faulty assumptions were made when projecting both income and expenses. The most common mistake here is to project income by multiplying weekly fees by the number of spaces in the program by the number of weeks the program is open. This method does project a program's maximum potential income if every space is filled for every week. But inevitably, a few children will leave the program in mid-year, and a lag of a week or more will occur before they are replaced; or a child will leave with two months remaining in the school year, and the space won't be filled; or a family will move out of town and neglect to pay their past due fees; or the welfare department will refuse to provide reimbursement for several snow days. A program that fails to account for

shortfalls such as these when planning its budget will find that it never has quite enough money to pay all the bills.

For a new program it is difficult to predict what the shortfall in income will be. A program should certainly not count on receiving more than 90% of its potential income. If the program is just opening, it might be risky to expect more than 75% in the first year. For an older program, the shortfall can probably be reasonably estimated based on previous years' experiences. This can be done by calculating the maximum potential income the program could have received in the past twelve months and dividing this amount into the amount of income the center actually received for the twelve months. For example, if a program had a maximum potential income of $50,000 for last year, but only received $45,000, this means it only received 90% of its potential income ($45,000 ÷ $50,000 = .90 or 90%). For the coming year, this program should set its budget no higher than 90% of its potential fee income.

Programs often under-project expenses by failing to include certain line items altogether. Most frequently neglected are expenses for staff training, leave time, salary increases, fuel cost increases, and major appliance repairs. Certain of these expenses (such as fuel and repairs) cannot be ignored -- money must be found to pay for them. Others (such as training and salary increases) can be ignored, and frequently are, but only at the cost of severely undermining staff morale.

2. Penny Wise and Dollar Foolish Cost Cutting. A program short of funds often responds by vigorously cracking down on expenditures for supplies. Napkins are cut in half, drawing is done on recycled computer paper, and free materials are scrounged from everywhere.

This response to insufficient funds is typical, and typically it is ineffective. Even if the average program cut its supply costs in half (which would begin to have a noticeable impact on curriculum quality), the net effect would be only to reduce the program's overall costs by about 1%. This does not mean that programs should not try to save money on supplies. Certainly all programs have an obligation to parents to keep costs as low as possible. The danger, however, is that the director and staff will work so hard on scrounging materials and limiting other activities that they will begin to think they are doing all they can to solve their money problem. In other words, they will be distracted from effectively addressing the problem.

To put cost cutting efforts into perspective, it is helpful to analyze the savings potential of each budget item (such as in the example in Exhibit A below). First, the annual amount allotted for each line item in the budget should be listed. Then the percent that each line item would have to be cut in order to save $1000 per year should be calculated. This is done by dividing $1000 by the amount of each line item. For example, in Exhibit A, the line item "Staff-Salaries" would have to be cut by 2.9% ($1000 ÷ $34,500) to save $1000.

Exhibit A

ABC AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM COST SAVINGS ANALYSIS

Budget Item	Annual Budget Amount	% of Reduction To Save $1000
Staff Salaries	$34,500	2.9%
Administrative Salaries	20,000	5.0
Curriculum Equipment and Supplies	3,000	33.0
Office Supplies and Equipment	2,000	50.0
Nutrition	15,000	6.5
Occupancy	15,000	6.7
Health	1,500	66.7
Transportation	4,000	25.0
Training	2,500	40.0
Social Services	2,000	50.0
Miscellaneous	1,000	100.0

A quick review of the resulting figures will identify those areas in which significant cuts can be made without a corresponding dramatic and negative impact on the program. For example, the ABC After-School Program would have to cut the "Social Services" line item by 50%, the "Training" line item by 40%, or the "Health" line item by 67% to save $1000. Obviously, cuts of this magnitude would dramatically alter these aspects of the program. On the other hand, there are four line items -- "Staff Salaries," "Administrative Salaries," "Nutrition," and "Occupancy"-- which would be reduced by less than 7% if $1000 were cut from them. These are clearly areas where ABC's staff should concentrate cost savings efforts in order to have the least adverse impact on the program.

By going through this process, program staff quickly identify three or four areas in which cost cutting is most feasible. Unfortunately, this process will not provide directions on how to make the actual cuts: charts or formulas do not offer a panacea for difficult decisions.

3. The Fruitless Fundraiser. To generate extra funds, programs often instigate fundraising projects which produce a limited financial return for a considerable time and energy expenditure. For example, one program sponsors a fair every year. This past year the fair netted $725 after expenses. To earn this amount, parents and staff donated over $100 in cash and 500 hours in labor. If, instead, each parent had donated only 7%, the center would have raised as much money with no effort.

Before engaging in any fundraising project, a program should perform a cash-benefit analysis. First, estimate the maximum amount of money the project could yield, after expenses. Then estimate the number of staff and volunteer hours required to carry out the project. Finally, divide the dollars by the hours. If the result is less than $10 per hour, the project is probably not worth the effort, from $10-$25 per hour, it is of marginal value, but above $25 per hour, it is clearly worthwhile. Really successful fundraisers have been known to yield over $100 per hour.

4. Checkbook Balance Money Management. In this situation the program director controls income and expenses solely by observing the checkbook

balance. If the checkbook balance is high, the director freely spends money. If the balance is low, the director spends money cautiously and works hard to cut costs. If the balance is in the red, the director launches a fundraising project.

Such a casual day to day form of money management could have disastrous consequences for the average child care program. A program could be deeply in debt but still have a positive checkbook balance because several major purchases made on credit have yet to be paid. This pitfall could result in the program being forced to raise fees mid-year if no funds are set aside in the fall to cover high heating costs in the winter. In other cases, the director may simply run short of money at the end of every month without knowing why or what to do about it.

To effectively keep a handle on a program's financial status, a director must know much more than how much money is in the checking account. The director must know how much money has been expended on each budget item, how much income has been received, whether these expense and income amounts are in line with what was budgeted, and whether sufficient funds are available for upcoming major expenses. This information can all be obtained by preparing a monthly status report. An example of such a report is shown in Exhibit B.

Exhibit B

ABC AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM MONTHLY STATUS REPORT

As of June 30

	Actual Activity To Date	Projected Activity To Date	Percentage of Target Achieved
Income:			
Parent Fees	15,000	14,500	103
Title XX	11,760	13,250	89
Food Program	5,550	5,700	97
United Way	5,250	5,250	100
Fundraising	40	400	10
Total Income	37,600	39,100	96
Expenses:			
Salaries	20,810	20,100	101
Substitutes	1,680	1,400	120
Fringe	3,260	3,200	102
Legal and Audit	600	800	75
Training	150	300	50
Rent	2,550	2,550	100
Utilities	300	350	86
Food	5,700	5,600	102
Supplies	1,200	1,150	104
Insurance	250	250	100
Loan	900	900	100
Total Expenses	36,400	37,100	101
Balance	+200	+2,000	10

The monthly status report can be relatively easy to prepare and interpret, and it provides invaluable information. The report format features a vertical list on the lefthand side with all income and expense line items from the budget. This list is followed by three horizontal columns of figures. In the first column, headed "Actual Activity To Date," are recorded the total income and total expenditure figures for each budget item as of the last day of the month being reviewed (the closing date). For example, in the report in Exhibit B, $15,000 in parent fees had been received and $20,810 in staff salaries had been expended as of June 30. These figures should be readily available from the program's accounting records. (To simplify the preparation of status reports, one account in these records should be set up for each budget item.)

In the second column, headed "Projected Activity To Date," is recorded the cumulative amount the program had planned in the budget to have received or expended as of the closing date. ABC After-School Program had projected receiving $14,500 in parent fees and expending $20,600 in staff salaries as of June 30. These projections are derived from the budget. The easiest way to do this is to divide each budget item by 12 to arrive at a monthly figure. This figure is then multiplied by the number of months that have passed in the budget year. In the report below, the "Projected" figure for rent is $2550, or $425 per month times 6 months. For certain budget items, projections cannot be made so easily. For programs in the northern part of the country, utility expenses are seldom the same every month as heating costs soar in the winter. Similarly, parent fees and staff salaries may dip in the summer months when enrollments decline. For variable items such as these, it may be necessary to project income or expenses month by month, based on experiences from previous years.

In the third column, headed "Percent of Target Achieved", is recorded the percent of the projected amount that the program actually received or expended for each budget item. As of June 30, ABC After-School Program had received only 89% of its projected Title XX income and had spent 101% of its projected salary expenses. The percentage figure is computed by dividing the actual amount by the "Projected" amount ($11,760 ÷ $13,250 = 89%).

There are a number of points to check in reviewing the monthly status report. First, of course, one should check the bottom line -- the "Balance" (calculated by subtracting "Total Expenses" from "Total Income"). In the ABC After-School Program example there is a positive balance of $200 as of June 30. This is bad news since the projected balance was $2000. This means that not enough money has been set aside to cover future expenses. Once a problem is found, the next step is to trace the cause by reviewing the "Percent" column. The objective here is to find income items that are significantly below 100%. In the example Title XX income (80%) and fundraising income (19%) are both far too low, and substitute expenses (120%) are running far too high.

With this report the director has discovered that even though there is money in the checkbook, there is a serious problem developing. The director is also aware that correction of this situation demands a focus of attention on the problems associated with Title XX, fundraising, and substitutes. In addition, he or she can see that small surpluses are accumu-

lating in certain expense items ("Legal and Audit," "Training," and "Utilities") which could be utilized to partially offset the deficits.

5. The False Sense of Security. In an effort to safeguard a program's funds, the program's board of directors may require that every expenditure be approved by the board and that every check be signed by two designated individuals. Controls such as these may seem to be foolproof. In practice they are often foolhardy. To be effective, the two signature procedure requires that both individuals signing any check review background documentation to be satisfied that the expenditure is appropriate. More often than not, the second person signing the checks automatically signs them assuming that the first person has already checked them out. The two signature procedure can also be inefficient. If both signers are not located at the program site much time can be wasted chasing after the second person. In cases where potential signers are unavailable, major payments or a payroll can be delayed. Some programs circumvent this problem by having one party sign a number of blank checks in advance. This, of course, undermines the safeguarding aspect of the system.

Having all expenditures approved by the board can also be counterproductive. It deflects valuable board time and energy from crucial policy making and evaluative functions. Instead of developing a sliding fee scale policy, the board debates what brand of construction paper to purchase. Just as importantly, in focusing on this type of detailed decision making, the board can undermine staff commitment and leadership. The message conveyed to the director and teachers is that they are not trusted and that their function is simply to carry out orders from above.

The biggest danger of both of these safeguards is that they provide a false sense of security. The appearance, but not the reality, of security results. To provide effective security a number of approaches can be implemented:

All money coming into the program should be documented with duplicate copies of prenumbered receipts.

All expenditures should be made with prenumbered checks and a file maintained with back-up invoices, receipts, or explanations for each check.

The checkwriting function should be separated from the bookkeeping and checkbook balancing functions.

Two signatures should be required on all purchases with the limit clearly established by the board. (Some public and private funding organizations may, of course, require two signatures on all checks.) In addition, two signatures should be required on all withdrawals from savings accounts.

The board should regularly review monthly status reports to seek explanations for any expense items that are exceeding budgeted amounts.

Some Helpful Resources

A number of resources are now available to help programs avoid money management pitfalls. Five of the most relevant of these resources

are listed below. The manual by Gross and Warshauer is especially comprehensive and practical in describing effective practices and procedures. The next three are useful as guides for developing accounting systems and statements. The last resource, Child Care Information Exchange, is a bimonthly management magazine for child care directors.

Atkinson, Jonathon. Day Care Accounting and Day Care Costs. Gryphon House, P.O. Box 217, Mt. Ranier, MD 20822.

Bennett, Paul. Up Your Accountability. Taft Products, Inc., 1000 Vermont Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20005.

Gross, Malvern and William Warshauer. Financial and Accounting Guide for Nonprofit Organizations (3rd edition). John Wiley and Sons.

Jones, Robert E. Dollars and Sense. Welfare Research, Inc. 112 State Street, Albany, New York 12207.

Child Care Information Exchange, 70 Oakley Road, Belmont, MA 02178. (Also available from this source is a 16-page booklet, "Reprint #3: Money Management.")

APPENDIX

Financial Management Assessment Guide

Developed by the
Child Care Information Exchange

The soundness of a program's financial management system is determined by the extent to which it meets these criteria:

Security -- The system must provide safeguards against accidental or fraudulent loss of assets as well as insure that all financial obligations are met.

Efficiency -- The system must minimize time wasted on unnecessary paper work and procedures.

Effectiveness -- The system must provide accurate information to decisionmakers on a timely basis.

The following questions are designed to be used as guides for assessing whether the major components of your program's financial managment system meet these criteria.

Establishing the Budget

1. Is the budget used as a means of implementing the program's goals?
2. Does the budget make allowances for unforeseen expenses and under-enrollments?
3. Does the budget provide for staff development, staff benefits, leave time, salary increases?

Developing the Fee Schedule

5. Are fees set high enough to meet the budget?
6. Does the fee schedule make allowances for a family's ability to pay?
7. Have fee policies dealing with expected contingencies been developed and publicized?

Receiving Money

8. Are all monies received documented with duplicate copies of prenumbered receipts?
9. Are all monies received promptly deposited into the organization's bank account?
10. Have procedures been established for collecting overdue payments?
11. Is fidelity insurance carried on all individuals handling the organization's money on a regular basis?

Spending Money

12. Are all disbursements made by prenumbered checks?
13. Are all disbursements clearly documented?
14. Are two signatures required on large checks and on all withdrawals from savings accounts?
15. Is the checkbook maintained by the director or other staff member on site?
16. Are petty cash disbursements kept to a minimum and carefully documented?

Keeping Records

17. Is the program's accounting system appropriate to its needs?
18. Is information on income and expenses recorded in such a form that it can be applied directly in preparing tax reports, grant claims, monitoring reports, and annual budgets?
19. Is bookkeeping performed by someone other than the person(s) who receive money, write checks, and handle petty cash?
20. Is bookkeeping performed by someone other than the director?
21. Are records maintained of the program's assets and liabilities -- major equipment and appliances, savings accounts, outstanding loans, etc?
22. Are bookkeeping records regularly reviewed for accuracy?

Monitoring Financial Status

23. Does the director (and board) regularly monitor the financial position of the program by analyzing monthly status reports?
24. Does the director (and board) regularly project the cash flow position of the program for the coming 6-12 months?
25. Does an outside accountant perform an annual financial audit?

Filing Reports and Paying Taxes

26. Is a written schedule of reports due to public and private agencies and parties within the organization prepared and adhered to?
27. Are tax payments made when required?

Making Ends Meet

28. In cutting costs is attention focused on areas where potential savings are the greatest?
29. In raising funds are projects selected which raise the most funds for the least effort?
30. Is fundraising utilized to supplement the regular operations of the program rather than to enable the program to meet its basic operating costs?

The Practitioner: The Key Person in the Evaluation Process

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Introduction: Why Engage in Program Evaluation?

Evaluations of extended-day programs are of interest to diverse groups.** For those underwriting the costs of an extended-day program, evaluation can ensure program accountability by demonstrating that a program is doing what the director, staff and others claim it should be doing. For parents, program evaluation can provide a plan for improving the quality of care for their children. From an academic perspective, program evaluation offers the opportunity for applied research and testing of theories of social behavior. For the practitioner (the program director, teacher, supervisor or coordinator), program evaluation makes it possible to assess the program that he or she is providing for children, their parents, and the community.

Recently, the notion of program evaluation has been incorporated into a wide range of federal, state and local programs. Lawmakers, administrators, and taxpayers have begun to question the effectiveness of social programs which are subsidized with public funds from federal, state or local sources. The idea of accountability has achieved such popularity that many states have enacted "sunset" regulations. Such laws require that funding be stopped if a program fails to meet a certain number of its

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**Throughout this paper, we will be referring to extended-day programs as those programs attended by school-age children, between the ages of 5 and 14, before and after school. In such programs, children receive care for two to eight hours a day in a center-based or family-based setting. (Bergstrom & Dreher, 1975).

goals within a stated period of time. For many programs that receive federal funds, an evaluation component is mandated; other programs take the initiative themselves to evaluate the effectiveness of their program services to children and families.

From a more global perspective, program evaluation can also demonstrate the usefulness of a program in terms of social reform. Extended-day programs, for example, can be viewed as experiments to solve a social concern. Through an evaluation of the appropriateness of certain programs and curriculum experiences -- the teaching of basic skills, the provision of adequate supervision, the use of specific facilities, and the like -- the well-being of school-age children who have mothers employed outside the home can be ascertained. Variations on a basic program model may be seen as social experiments; evaluations can help the public assess which ones are more likely to produce the desired outcomes.

What is Program Evaluation?

Program evaluation has been defined by Wholey and others in the following terms:

> Evaluation (1) assesses the effectiveness of an ongoing program in achieving its objectives; (2) relies on the principles of research design to distinguish a program's effects from those of other forces working in the community; and (3) aims at program improvement through a modification of current operational practices. (Miringoff, 1980, p. 134).

It is also necessary to note at this point that the evalution should be planned so that it feeds back information which can be the basis for improving the program. This facet of the planning stage is critical.

Our discussion focuses primarily on a formal approach to evaluation. It is assumed that specific funds to conduct the evaluation will be made available from the agency or agencies sponsoring the extended-day program, or from other sources.

Who Should Be Involved in the Process?

As discussed by Miringoff, any plan for program evaluation must involve full participation of staff members involved in the program. The practitioner responsible for program administration, for example, should play an integral role in every stage of the evaluation, even though outside evaluators are involved. The practitioner is the natural person to deal with outlining the short- and long-term goals of the program, defining the types of questions to be asked, deciding who is to be involved in the evaluation process, and exploring the possible ways to answer the questions.

Community people should be involved in the evaluation process. They often have keen insights into the program, especially if the program children use facilities with which they are associated, such as the library and media center or recreation facilities. In fact school-age children are also of value to the evaluation process. Often articulate and aware of those

aspects of the program that they find favorable or unfavorable, these children can make specific suggestions as to how the program could be changed.

By involving themselves, their staff, the children, parents, and other community members in data gathering, practitioners are more likely to produce information needed to evaluate the achievement of the program's goals. Information gathered from many representative sources can help the practitioner and other program advocates provide a balance to efforts of policy makers and others who may find the programs ineffective or undesirable for one reason or another. Also, a well-conceived evaluation at the local level may counteract the negative effects of some poorly conceived large studies, conducted by evaluators who do not have a "grass-roots" understanding of extended-day programs.

What is the Evaluation Process?

The evaluation process consists of seven steps (see Figure 1). The practitioner plays a key role at each step.

Figure I

The Evaluation Process

Step 1	Understand the Fundamental Question: Why Evaluate?
Step 2	Clarify Short- and Long-Term Program Goals
Step 3	Plan the Evaluation Design
Step 4	Develop a Strategy to Collect Information
Step 5	Analyze the Information Collected
Step 6	Prepare and Disseminate the Evaluation Report
Step 7	Use Findings to Improve Program

Step 1. Understanding and Accepting the Purposes of the Evaluation. The process of evaluation is costly, time-consuming and demanding of all those involved. The costs and potential benefits to staff, children, parents and groups within the community must be identified and weighed before determining what specific aspects of the program are to be evaluated and how they are to be evaluated. Who will be involved directly in the evaluation process? How much time will this involvement require? Will it necessitate giving up other responsibilities? Are all interested parties aware of the fact that an evaluation will be conducted? Do they know why? (For example, is the evaluation mandated by agencies outside the program? Is it desired by people working inside the program? Who is most interested in seeing the evaluation results? Can the practitioner anticipate at the outset how he or she will make use of the results?) On balance, is participation in the evaluation process perceived as a positive, healthy, step? Once these questions have been answered, a commitment to proceed with the evaluation can be made.

Step 2. Clarifying Short- and Long-Term Programs. One of the most effective ways to clarify goals is to have a practitioner, usually the director, work with a team of people which includes staff, children, parents, and community representatives. Ultimately, it will be the responsibility of the practitioner to interpret the different needs of children, families, and the community, and to express these as clearly stated short-term and long-term program goals. The practitioner then communicates these goals to the evaluator(s).

This step is critical, and may well prove to be more difficult than it sounds. Reviews of several extended-day programs suggest that while many have broadly stated objectives, there is usually a lack of specificity as to what these mean on a short-term or long-term basis. The dialogue represented below (between a practitioner and a program evaluator) illustrates the gap which may exist between the practitioner's general conceptualization of the program and a statement of measurable goals for the program.

> Program Evaluator: How would you describe the goals of your program?
>
> Practitioner: As a director of a small extended-day program, I am trying to provide a safe and secure place for children; a place where several children can be together, work together and enjoy themselves in the afternoon. I am committed to providing a recreational program for the children where they can be safe and secure.
>
> Program Evaluator: Can you describe what you mean by "safe and secure" in more specific terms?
>
> Practitioner: By "safe and secure," I mean a place where children can come to play, engage in activity and be with other children and an adult. A place which the children know is always going to be there. A place where they can come after school is out and be with others.
>
> Program Evaluator: Does "safe and secure" mean anything in terms of staff-child ratio?
>
> Practitioner: A staff-child ratio of one adult to eight children appears to work for us.
>
> Program Evaluator: Tell me, does "safe and secure" mean anything in terms of the indoor and outdoor environment for the children? Do you have indoor and outdoor facilities?
>
> Practitioner: Yes! We have beautiful facililities, both indoors and outdoors. Both areas have everything one could imagine and hope to use.
>
> Program Evaluator: Explain for me the physical layout of the indoors facilities and purpose of each piece of equipment, and please do the same for the outdoors. Perhaps we should consider doing a diagram.
>
> Practitioner: I'd be glad to and as I do it the recreational aspect of the extended-day program will become obvious to you.

Indoors we have areas where the children can engage in arts and crafts, such as weaving, painting and creating three-dimensional objects. Actually, there are three areas in the large playroom which are set up for these types of creative and expressive activities. There are other areas for indoor activities also.

Outdoors we have a number of areas in which the children can plan and engage in sports such as soccer, badminton and baseball. In addition to setting up the space and planning for these activities indoors and outdoors, we also have staff specialists who teach and help the children to engage in recreational activities; for example, one staff person coaches sports such as baseball, soccer and badminton, and another person teaches several arts and crafts activities to the children.

Program Evaluator: Okay, it appears that the challenge for us will be first to develop an evaluation process to understand the extent to which this is a safe and secure place for the children, and second, to determine the extent to which this is a recreational program. A variety of methods for collecting this information might be useful. The perceptions of staff, children, parents and others will be critical.

This dialogue suggests how the practitioner and the evaluator can work together towards a better understanding of the program. The dialogue also highlights the importance of the second step: ensuring that the evaluation design is based on a clear understanding of the goals of the program.

Step 3. Planning the Evaluation Design. This step is rather technical. As such, the expertise of the outside evaluator(s) will be helpful at this stage. An evaluation design which depends upon random assignment of children to different groups is usually impossible when working with an ongoing social program, such as an extended-day program. Therefore, some other evaluation design must be devised. This might involve measurements of behaviors, attitudes, skills, and the like, before and after participation in the extended-day program, or the comparison of children enrolled in one program with children enrolled in another program. While the technical aspects of this step are the responsibility of the evaluator(s), the practitioner should remain informed, to ensure that the evaluation design does not impose an unexpected burden on the program and does not violate any ethical constraints.

Step 4. Developing a Strategy to Collect Information. This step obviously depends upon successful completion of the preceding steps--specific program goals must have been identified and an evaluation design must be in place. Again, the technical expertise of the evaluator(s) is important here. One "control" that the practitioner needs to be aware of is that more than one data collection format should be used. There is a wide range of formats for collecting data. Dozens of standardized test instruments exist, and one or more of these may be appropriate for a particular program evaluation. Many of these are described in The Eighth Mental Measurements Yearbook. Much use can be made of informal assessment techniques -- a few of which are described here briefly. A daily log, a format for recording observations, enables the staff member to record both

daily plans and thoughts and feelings about what has happened each day in the extended-day program. A log kept over a period of time is a useful reference source; it might be used, for example, to pinpoint activities which occurred on specific days.

A daily log, kept by the school-age child, is also a useful evaluation tool. By encouraging the child to provide a systematic record of his activities, the evaluator can determine the type of activities a child engages in, the amount of time he/she devotes to an activity, the other children and adults involved in the activity, and so on. It is helpful to have the child record in the diary in a manner facilitating the coding of data along specific dimensions.

Another method is participant observation. This refers to a method of study whereby a staff member actively participates in a group in order to learn more about both individual members and the group as a whole. The staff member might interact with the group in a variety of ways including eating, playing games, sports activities, or craft projects. In some instances, the children might know they are being observed; in other situations the children will be unaware of the staff person's role as observer. After each session the participant observer records his impressions and ideas, either in written or taped form.

Checklists provide a system for recording the presence or absence of certain behaviors. The observer is simply required to give a "yes" or "no" response on the checklist. (A participant observer might use a checklist after he/she had left the scene of the observation while a non-participant observer could simultaneously observe the children and complete a checklist.) Since the questions on the checklists are compiled in advance, they enable one to rapidly gather a great deal of information relating to the child's language, cognitive, perceptual, social and emotional development. Checklists allow one to quickly determine the specific books the children are reading, the games they are playing, and the other ways they are spending their time.

A sociometric test is a series of questions asking children whom they would like to associate with in specific situations. The information gathered from these questionnaires can be combined to make a sociogram, which enables staff to learn which children like to associate with one another. Sociometric tests sometimes provide information about the status of children within the group; that is, which children the group considers desirable as workmates and playmates and which children the group considers less desirable as workmates and playmates.

Parent interviews provide the opportunity for the extended-day staff and parent to discuss the child, to share information, and to gain a better understanding of the child in a number of settings. Children this age can also be interviewed and are frequently reliable in the information that they report.

A case study of a child and family often provides useful information on the meaning of the program for the families involved. The interviewer can, for example, gather information regarding the value of the program for the child and his/her family. The focus of the case study will depend on the objectives of the extended-day program.

Portfolios can be designed to store samples of children's creations and written work. Each child could have his/her own portfolio. As the child creates a significant work, either the original work or a photograph of it can be placed in the portfolio. Each sample should be accompanied by an index card which includes the date the work was completed, the time of day, the name of the person collecting the work, and notes regarding the creation. This work documents not only the child's interests, but also the extent to which there has been development in specific areas such as the writing of stories and poems and painting and drawing.

The choice of formats used will depend in part upon the evaluation design. The practitioner should remember that information collected as part of the evaluation process can also be of great use to the extended-day staff as they talk with children, as they meet with parents, and as they work together to develop the program.

Step 5. Analyzing the Information Collected. Depending on the formats used to gather information, there may be anecdotal data, samples from logs or portfolios, or statistical data. While the analysis can be implemented by outside evaluator(s), the practitioner has a role in ensuring that the information is in fact representative of the program and that conclusions drawn from the data correspond to reality. Whatever conclusions the data point to -- be they critical or commendatory -- they should seem valid to those who best know the program.

Step 6. Preparing and Disseminating the Evaluation Report. This task is best accomplished as a collaborative effort. The practitioner can provide information relating to the background, organization and goals of the program, while the evaluator(s) can describe the evaluation design and the results obtained from the data analysis. Both practitioner and evaluator should identify the practical, political, and ethical implications of the final report. Issues of privacy and confidentiality must be respected. Anyone quoted by name in the final report should have an opportunity to verify the accuracy of the quotation. If the entire valuation has in fact been a collaborative venture, the anlaysis and recommendations in the final report should not come as a surprise to anyone. Finally, the tone and content of the report should be appropriate for the agency or individuals who initiated the evaluation. If the report, or portions of it, are going to be shared with parents, or funding sources, or others, the report should also reflect their contributions and views.

Step 7. Incorporating Evaluation Findings Into the Ongoing Program. Whether the evaluation report is positive, negative, or somewhere in between, the process should not stop when the report is distributed. It is the practitioner's responsibility to use the information generated by the evaluation to improve or strengthen the existing program. The evaluation may, for example, suggest a way to clarify or rethink program goals, or indicate a need for new or different staff development efforts to achieve program goals. The practitioner may want periodically to repeat some of the steps of the formal evaluation process on an informal basis or to assess the continued growth and development of the program.

In one sense, the practitioner or program administrator is always evaluating the extended-day program, determining whether things are going well and whether children, staff and parents are pleased with the

program. The experience of a formal evaluation brings an external perspective to this process. It helps to clarify program goals and enriches the practitioner's repertoire of techniques for assessing the effectiveness of the program. If the evaluation process is carried out in a thoughtful, comprehensive, and collaborative fashion, it should result in an improved program to meet the needs of children, staff, parents, and the community.

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*Documents with ED numbers are available through the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) in microfiche and paper copy, unless otherwise noted. (For information on obtaining ERIC documents, in libraries or by mail, see page 104.) Some of these documents are also available from their original source.

Part III: PROGRAM MODELS

The First Avenue After-School Day Care Center: A Program for Low Income Families in New York City

Charles Jarm

Director, First Avenue After-School Day Care Center, Chinatown Planning Council, New York, New York

The Chinatown Planning Council in New York City sponsors seven after-school day care centers which care for children, ages six through twelve, after school and full-time during school vacations. The centers differ from one another in their ethnic makeup and program operation. Six of the centers, which are strategically placed around Chinatown, draw children exclusively from the Chinese population. The First Avenue After-School Day Care Center, however, is located on the Lower East Side of New York in a neighborhood that has become a typical "melting pot."

The majority of our families are immigrants from places such as Hong Kong, China, Latin America, India, Pakistan, Puerto Rico, Korea and Nigeria. They live in crowded ghetto apartments. Two wage earners are essential to the economic survival of the families, but single parents working to make a living are not unusual.

Multilingual Teachers

In most cases the parents in the families we serve do not know much English. At the First Avenue ASDCC we have a multilingual staff, all of whom are college graduates with degrees in education and specialties (including art, English and elementary education) that benefit the children. In our center the predominant foreign languages are Chinese and Spanish.

Most of the immigrant children are bilingual in varying degrees. The staff can communicate in these languages, and whenever difficulties occur, the bilingual children can come to the rescue and act as translators for their peers.

At regularly scheduled parents' meetings, a miniature United Nations exists. The meeting is conducted in English, but it is translated by the staff into Spanish and Chinese.

Homework Assistance

Helping children with their homework is a major problem for the families we serve. Most parents are unable to help their children because of their language difficulties and a lack of specific subject knowledge. Also, cooking and other household duties take up much of the parents' time after work. Quite often there is no time left to help children with their homework.

In addition, we have found that public school teachers often fail to explain fully to the children how to do their homework. Frequently, the children feel intimidated and are afraid to ask for help, even when they do not understand the instructions.

Tutorial Period. For these reasons, during the school year we devote an hour a day to homework tutorial help. By establishing a structure and a positive, helpful attitude towards doing homework, we are helping children develop good work habits. As soon as the children arrive at the center, they take out their books and do their homework. A survey this year indicated that over 95% of the children in our center prefer doing homework before going to other activities. Children know they will have more time to do other things if the homework is done first.

Because we are a small center with a capacity enrollment of 65, we have divided the children into three groups with a teacher and assistant in each group. This forms a ratio of about one staff member to ten children. On occasion, our staff have tutored individuals and small groups on a particular subject matter while the rest of the children continue to do their individual homework.

The children are seated according to their age and grade level so that when the teacher goes around the room to check homework it is manageable and less frantic. When the children are clustered it also creates an opportunity for them to consult and help each other.

Public School Facilities. It is easy for us to confer with the school teachers because we utilize the public school's facilities for our day care center. We have a very good rapport with the administrators and staff of the school and information that is mutually beneficial is easily obtained.

Family Support. We feel that helping children with their homework may reduce tension at home between parents and children; may lessen the chance of teachers' requesting parents to take a valuable day off from work for conferences; may lessen confrontations between teachers and children; and, possibly, may encourage a more harmonious family life.

Children gain self-confidence when they know that their work is done. They feel more secure and comfortable in facing their teachers and peers the next day. There is more leisure time in the evening if their work is done before going home. Once a child returns home from day care there are three or four hours at the most before it is bed time. We believe it is important for families to use this time for family-oriented activities that strengthen the family unit.

Other Activities

An hour and a half is allotted to snack and homework at the after-school center. The remainder of the day (during the school year) is used for other activities. The teachers may teach a skill or help develop talents. On two days a week during the school year we play down the homework help. Workshops in various skills and activities are provided for the children to select and to enjoy. These workshops are on a rotating basis so that the children can have a variety of experiences during

those two days. The staff at First Avenue are versatile and have many skills. They work with the children in activities such as cooking, knitting, needlepoint, crocheting, and painting. In the summer, they plan swimming and trips away from the center. We go by subway or, on rare occasions, we charter a bus to take us outside the city limits.

In conclusion, we believe that a variety of factors must be taken into consideration when planning an after-school program. Some of these factors include the backgrounds, living conditions and particular needs of the families we serve. These are the factors we have kept in mind in trying to develop a high quality, responsive program for school-age children.

St. Louis Child Care Services, Biddeford, Maine: A Multi-Faceted Program

Betty Van Wyck

Director, St. Louis Child Care Services,
Biddeford, Maine, 1971-79

In November, 1971, St. Louis Child Care Services began its operations by opening the Children's Center in Biddeford, Maine. Sponsored by the Diocesan Human Relations Services, Inc., the Children's Center continued the tradition of child care begun at the turn of the century by the St. Louis Home in Scarborough.

A former school, St. Joseph's, was used for the initial facility of the Children's Center. Renovations to the first floor of the building provided comfortable space for forty preschool children.

School-age child care began during the first year and has grown as an integral part of the multi-faceted program we offer. At first we had staff members' children who came to be with their parents when not in school. Very soon we enrolled several school-age children with special problems, children for whom there seemed to be no other program. Eight years later we have a preschool child care program which includes eight school-age children who have handicaps, a morning kindergarten with afternoon child care, three day care homes which enroll some after-school children, a summer program for school children up to nine years of age, and evening shift child care for three to eight year olds.

Throughout the program's history, the services we provide have been based on the following ideals: 1) children benefit from a high quality environment provided by a variety of caring adults from their own community groups, and supported by professional staff; 2) children learn self control by having freedom within a few firm limits, by making choices, taking care of materials, managing daily routines, and by associating with adults who use reasonable self control; 3) children can feel secure within an extended family of adults and children, where they make close attachments to certain adults and children of their own choice and become friendly with a variety of capable and caring people; 4) children need to learn to take care of themselves as much as possible, to become responsible and caring toward others, and to have sufficient strength, personal ease, and humor to survive stress and to enjoy themselves and others; 5) children and staff from a variety of backgrounds, including different religions, races, economic levels and handicapping conditions, are welcome in our programs.

This paper will provide an overview of the programs and services offered by the St. Louis Child Care Services and will describe how we came to enroll school-age children in our programs.

Programs and Services

The Children's Center. The Center provides care for 65 preschool children, two and a half through five years of age, and is open from 6:15 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.

Child Care Homes. These satellite homes were opened in Biddeford (1974), in Saco (1976), and on the campus of the University of New England (1977). The three homes enroll infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-age children.

Project Welcome. This project integrates up to 20 young children with special needs and handicapping conditions into all progams of the St. Louis Child Care Services. Monies from the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped are used to support the enrollment of these children. This unusual program demonstrates the value of children sharing experiences with children mutually and equally, regardless of handicaps or developmental variations.

Kindergarten. The kindergarten is available to children enrolled with St. Louis Child Care Services. This class of 15 children is taught by a certified and experienced teacher and is approved by the State Department of Education.

Summer Program. Generally limited to families already enrolled with St. Louis Child Care Services this program provides a variety of activities, including swimming lessons, gymnastics and sports for 20 children in early elementary grades.

After School and Evening Shift Care. For children whose parents work the evening shift, care is provided at the Children's Center from 2:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. Participating children are three to eight years of age.

Support Services. A Family Support Program offers regular home visits, informal family activities, assistance in finding needed services and help in family emergencies.

Nutrition Program. This program provides family style meals and snacks prepared in our own kitchen.

Health Services. A nurse and a team of consulting specialists assist in planning for the individual needs of children.

The Enrollment of School-Age Children

Our first school-age child was referred to us by a school principal as a child who simply could not make it in kindergarten and who came from a family with many problems. She became part of our preschool child care center program. The following year she went to public kindergarten and we offered to keep her in the center before and after school. We helped her learn to bathe and dress for school, taught her how to walk to school alone, and greeted her warmly when she came back to the center for lunch in the afternoon. When she entered first grade she continued to spend the early mornings and afternoons with us. When she moved out of town toward the end of her first grade year, this little girl was functioning well within normal limits in the community and at school.

A legally blind boy, who was thought to be retarded, was also enrolled that first year. The program for blind children would not accept him because he was diagnosed as retarded, the retarded program would not enroll him because he was blind and the cerebral palsy program would not consider a multiply handicapped child. So he came to day care with us. His family had been told that he would never be able to do anything. As a result, it never occurred to them to let him try. At five years of age he had never fed himself or taken off his hat or mittens. He walked backwards. He quoted television commercials and the pledge of allegiance. No one had ever talked with him so he talked to himself. He had never played with toys or with other children near his age. We treated him like a much younger child at first. Very gradually he changed from a completely isolated individual to a child who was making a beginning toward enjoying himself and others. He spent two and a half years with us and was then enrolled in a public kindergarten. Since then he has gone to school at the center for blind children that originally refused to take him. He is still a very unusual child. His physical and vision problems will always be with him and he will never completely recover from the tragedy of being treated like a helpless infant for five years. We wish he and his family could have had help much earlier.

An eight year old girl came in with her foster mother one day during our second year of operation. This very unusual child had never spent more than a half hour in school. With a history of being severely abused she had been placed in foster care as an infant. The foster mother had been asked to keep her until she was old enough to be placed in a state institution for the retarded. At the time she came to us her emotional control was like that of a two year old. Whenever she was interrupted or asked to participate in routines she would explode in anger and distress. We made an absolute minimum number of demands on her. Very slowly she was able to accept the routines, transitions, and the limits of the child care day. Before she left us she was reading and writing, and she had put on a puppet show for the "Little Kids," complete with poster to announce the show, and had kept the children's attention while she presented it. She is now in public school spending some time each day in a resource room. She still struggles with emotional problems but everyone recognizes she is a very bright child.

Thus, our school-age child care really began with our willingness to adapt a preschool program to meet the needs of a few children with special problems. We continue to have school-age children enrolled in our preschool child care program. At present most of these children are referred to us by school districts. Under our mandatory education law in Maine, children who are five years old and up may attend a child care program if this is considered to be the preferable educational placement for the child, and if the program can provide a special education professional in the building. By following these guidelines, school districts can be reimbursed for the cost by the Department of Education. Our preschool child care program lends itself to the integration of older children who have special problems because children from two and a half through five years of age are together in family groupings and because we have an individualized approach, using both early childhood and Montessori philosophies in order to provide a developmental environment for children.

For several years, staff members' children who were in half-day kindergarten or in early elementary grades came to us before and after school and during school vacations and snow days. Sometimes they were regularly enrolled, and sometimes this was an informal arrangement. Other parents began to request school-age child care, especially for the half-day kindergarten child. In Biddeford a child spends a half year in the morning kindergarten and a half year in the afternoon kindergarten. Parents find it nearly impossible to find reasonable child care for the broken periods of the day, since many Biddeford parents begin work at 7:00 a.m. on the first shift in the mills and the children are not allowed on the school grounds until 8:00 a.m. A morning kindergarten class in our center, which allowed children to be enrolled for the full hours of our child care program, seemed to be a reasonable solution to these problems. The need for a smaller and more individualized kindergarten class for some children was another factor in our decision to offer a kindergarten program. Some children in our child care program were not ready for public kindergarten but could benefit from a smaller class. Some of these were children with handicaps. Every year we have had a waiting list for the kindergarten without extending our enrollment beyond our own children. A few spaces in our kindergarten are always reserved for children with special needs and handicapping conditions who may be referred by school districts in the fall.

At the end of our first kindergarten year it became obvious that parents expected that their children would remain in child care during the summer before they began first grade. In response to this we developed a summer program for our own kindergarten children and a few other children of early elementary age. (These additional children are either siblings of children presently enrolled or children who have been enrolled previously in our child care program.) The summer program includes gymnastics, swimming lessons and many field trips. It is essentially a day camp program with a home base in the kindergarten room of the Children's Center.

In 1976 we opened a child care home as a satellite to our day care center. The home was located in the personal residence of two board members whose children were a new-born infant and a child about to start first grade. We licensed their home in the name of St. Louis Child Care Services and hired a staff person. The use of their home was an inkind contribution to our program and the family paid fees for the enrollment of their own children. We enrolled another infant and several additional school-age children in this child care home, thus beginning another aspect of our school-age child care. Two older children in this program have been enrolled with St. Louis continuously since 1973. We feel that a combination of child care homes and a center program for infants, preschoolers, and school-age children provides not only unusual continuity and stability in child care for growing children, but also a variety of choices to meet the needs of children and families.

We are pleased that our extended family model has been recognized by a number of our children who have returned to us at ages ten to twelve as volunteers. This is yet another facet of school-age child care for us, as we provide supervision and guidance for these youngsters as they care for younger ones. It is also a good example of the natural way in which our program continues to grow.

The Brookline After-School Special: A Program for Older Elementary Children in Brookline, Massachusetts

The Parent's Perspective

Samuel B. Wheeler

Chairman of the Board, Brookline After-School Special Program, Brookline, Massachusetts

The "Brookline After School Special" was created in 1978 to meet the after-school needs of older elementary school-age children throughout Brookline, Massachusetts. Unlike the existing school-age programs, serving local needs in local elementary schools, this one was designed to attract older children from throughout the town.

Why Did We Do It?

In several ways, the Brookline After School Special Program (BASS) was the outcome of both the successes and the failures of after-school programs in the town. The success of extended day programs, which by 1978 had been established in every elementary school in town, had created a sizeable constituency of satisfied customers who both filled the programs and acted as advertisements, thereby creating still more demand. At Devotion School, the waiting list was nearly as large as the program enrollment. The size and longevity of some of the established programs also meant that there were many children who were veterans of three or four years in the same after-school setting, engaging in activities which had to appeal to kids from five to nine years old. They were showing signs of growing stale. There were also parents who found themselves with ten-year-old "graduates" who had had good after-school activities and who now had no regular, comparable place to go after school.

A number of efforts to provide suitable after school activities for older kids had been made prior to 1978. The town-wide extended day advisory committee, chaired by Mickey Seltzer of Brookline Human Relations Youth Resources, had held a number of meetings on the needs of older children and a grant proposal had been developed to try to address the needs of these children. Devotion School experimented with a program called "Bebop," consisting of a check-in center with optional activities which attempted to at least monitor the whereabouts of children after school. Several schools developed "Activities Programs," short courses or sequences of activities thought to be of interest to children from third grade up. None of them succeeded in combining the security and continuity of supervision desired by working or studying parents with the level of interest desired by the children.

BASS was established because the pressures of need coincided with the availability of space. The Devotion program had been seeking alternative sites outside the school for some time when Seltzer brought news of possible space in the Sewall school building. The necessary energy and opportunity were in place. I, as a parent from Devotion School, decided to work on a new program for older children at the new site. The program would cater to children throughout the town and would serve to relieve some pressure on space at my school.

How Did We Do It?

The first step was to convene a steering committee of representatives from each program and the Brookline Human Relations-Youth Resources. With a few changes in personnel, this committee became the founding body. It met in April of 1978 and began to brainstorm with Harry Lent, adult education coordinator for the Brookline public schools, about the possibilities of implementing the program.

It would be tedious to relate in sequence all the dozens of meetings and the unexpected turns of events that preceded the opening of the program. What I believe worth highlighting are the concerns that were uppermost in our minds as we planned, and the elements that provided the solutions. Our primary worries concerned arrangements for space, limits on enrollment, qualifications of staff, transportation, and apportionment of money. Organization and management were less pressing concerns.

Space. Could we really have space in Sewall School? How much? Was it suitable? What about competition for the space? Fortunately, the school department and school committee had been great friends of extended day care in Brookline. They were willing to donate space and custodian service, without which the program would scarcely be possible. In this case they also provided part of the problem, since the space that was to be allocated to us on June 19 was suddenly withdrawn. The matter was not settled until mid-August. We determined that the proposed space, though old and of uncertain amount, would be adequate, expecially since we envisioned a program in which children would use the building as a home base and would travel from it on frequent trips.

Enrollment. Would we have too great a demand or too little? what ages should be involved? Should there be an upper limit? What would be the impact of a preponderance of the children from one school? Which children would we choose to enroll if we had more applicants than we could accommodate?

To answer some of these questions, we distributed a questionnaire to as much of the school population from grades 2-7 as we could reach, describing the proposed program and asking for expressions of general interest and of the kinds of activities desired. On the basis of the answers, we estimated that we might have as many as 70 children enrolled, mostly from two or three schools and concentrated in grades 3-5. There was only minor interest from the sixth grade. Although, on the basis of these data, it did not appear that we would be swamped, we did derive a formula for equal distribution of enrollment slots among schools. The enrollment we had on opening day corresponded closely, in size and complexion, to our estimates. (We have found that the users of day care in

this program are typical of users in other programs within Brookline. Most are from Devotion and Pierce, the schools with the highest percentage of single parents, and most are children of households where the parent or parents work outside the home.)

Staff. Before advertising for staff, we spent some time making decisions about the type of staff we wanted. We wanted a varied staff with a diversity of talents and interests, a variety of racial backgrounds if possible, and a fairly even distribution of men and women. We wanted to be sure that they were, as a group, equipped to lead children in sports (a heavy favorite in the parent survey) and music, as well as games and crafts. We hoped to foster a noncompetitive atmosphere in which the individual worth of each child could find affirmation. We wanted the minimum of regimentation and coercion compatible with safety and good order.

We decided to advertise for and pick a director first, even though time was short, and to let him or her assist in choosing the rest of the staff. (As it happened, the director ended up making practically all the decisions on staffing with very little involvement from parents.) Advertising and a referral provided good candidates for director and we have been very pleased with our eventual choice. The staff for year one had four women and two men in addition to the director. All were white, but with a very nice blend of complementary interests.

Transportation. How could we move kids from seven or eight schools each day? Get them home? What would it cost? Should we buy a vehicle? In the end we did not buy our own vehicle or provide our own driver but found it more convenient to hire one or more of the following: a school bus, station wagons, and taxis. On certain days, the bus was retained for the entire afternoon for special trips, but with time our image of the mobile after-school program faded. The kids did not really want to travel that much.

Money. We were not worried about "front money." The Devotion program offered to provide a "cushion," and contributions from other programs paid for initial postage and printing. Our collective experience with existing programs gave us confidence about how to proceed.

We were chiefly worried about estimating transportation costs and, to a lesser extent, about setting the director's salary. We underestimated actual transportation costs by about $3,500 in our first budget, and overestimated enrollment so that our first projections of rates were lower than the final rates by about 30%.

The salary of the director was the focus of a number of debates of the sort that divide many day-care boards. Do we aim at the lowest possible rates or do we aim at the best possible staff? Do we set high rates and offer scholarships or sliding rates, or do we keep rates low and make the program almost universally affordable? The steering committee discussed these questions at length until the issue was resolved in favor of those who felt that high pay brought the greater good. The same rate was charged for all children. Scholarships, amounting to about 5% of total budget, were offered to all who applied.

Organization and management. The structure of other programs provided a framework which was more or less taken for granted. It was

readily agreed that the parent board would assume responsibility for fiscal management: collection of fees, payables, bookkeeping, incorporation, and tax exempt status. We had ready-made contract forms, procedures, payment systems and scholarship procedures, as well as knowledge of what had to be done to achieve incorporation as a non-profit entity. Some time was saved (and perhaps some issues overlooked) by this method. We concentrated on getting started and postponed some formalities of organization such as by-laws, elected officers and a board. By January, however, we had all of these elements.

What Are Our Present Concerns?

In looking back at the first year, I would make these comments. We rejoice that we have a program, that we found a good staff and an excellent, conscientious director, and that by and large the kids like and are proud of our program. We do not wish to underrate our pride and satisfaction.

We have some regrets and anxieties. We are conscious of a lack of parent involvement at many levels: little contact with staff, little extracurricular social exchange among parents (often excused by involvement of parent board members in more pressing matters). This has contributed to a lowering of staff morale and an atmosphere of "taking staff for granted" among parent-customers.

We regret rates which are higher than those of most other programs in town, the lack of subsidized slots for children of welfare recipients, the limit that needing transportation places on the system, and some deficiencies in space and site.

Most of the things we regret at present we feel can improve in the future. We may work for more and better space, more parent involvement, more fund raising, and so on.

It has occurred to us that it may not be possible for a day care program for older children to enjoy the degree of parent involvement and concern that is often found in day care programs for younger children. We worry less about our older children. They are better able to make their own opinions known, articulate their own needs and feelings. At some level we are conscious of this and perhaps feel less need to monitor the care they are given. We are used to entrusting them to others. For these reasons, a different strategy for building parent participation into the program may be called for.

It is my opinion that we have made a good beginning but there are still many interesting questions to be asked. Have we really discovered what "older children" will thrive on in an after-school program? How do we find the right balance between custody and freedom? Is the "After School Special" really special enough?

The Director's Perspective

Cynthia E. Wilson

Director, Brookline After-School Special Program, Brookline, Massachusetts

The Brookline, Massachusetts, After-School Special Program provides a variety of activity oriented experiences in an after-school setting for third through sixth grade children attending Brookline public schools. An underlying philosophy maintains that knowledge is best retained in a relaxed atmosphere where a "learn by doing" approach is promoted. Consequently, the program includes scheduled as well as spontaneous activities in art, music, cooking, dancing, athletics, strategy games, ecology and nature, dramatics, and orienteering. Field trips to museums, book shops, and local manufacturers are scheduled weekly so that the chidren may learn about the area in which they live.

The program is designed to attend to the cognitive, social-emotional, and physical aspects of a child's growth and development. Enriching experiences which allow for trial and error experimentation and which promote creativity are planned. Growth in self-reliance, self-esteem, and feelings of competence is fostered. The ability to make choices and to share and cooperate with others is encouraged. Good physical exercise, including athletics as well as dance and movement, is a regular part of the program. The need for some children to relax and unwind from school, to read, to do homework, or to sit and talk with a friend is recognized and supported. The nature of the program, therefore, allows for activity and leisure, individual and group experiences, and indoor and outdoor activities, depending upon the choices of the children and the staff.

The structure of the daily schedule remains fairly consistent throughout the week. The children arrive at the center at approximately 2:30 p.m. and meet in assigned groups for snack. They hear important messages and choose activities for the afternoon. Children choose two from twelve possible activities, the first one running from 3:00-4:00 and the second from 4:00-5:00. Time to be with a friend, do homework, read, or simply relax is an option for each child. After 5:00 the children spend time with one another playing quiet games, reading, or participating in any other quiet activity they wish. All children leave the program for the day between 5:30 and 5:45 p.m. Several times during the year, they pursue ongoing activities such as making movies, cooking gourmet foods, making and binding books, and batiking. In addition, members of the local community are invited to share their experiences in such areas as puppet theater and science experiments.

The After-School Special is housed in the Sewall School. It operates on the second floor in two classrooms (each approximately 25' x 35') and a small library corner (approximately 10' x 12'). The indoor space is designed with flexibility in mind. Each of the two large rooms is divided in half, thereby affording four smaller areas. Each area is arranged differently, with large work tables, desks, and chairs. Rugs, pillows, and

curtains on the windows promote a relaxed, home-like atmosphere. A movable wall, built by two parents, serves as both a room divider and a favorite surface for drawing and painting. There is a small gymnasium on the first floor. The building does not contain kitchen facilities; however, a nearby school has offered the use of its home economics room. A playground behind the school and one across the street are utilized by the program and hikes to a nearby pond and bus trips to various parks are scheduled each week.

The staff of the After-School Special consists of six full-time counselors and one full-time program director. Their backgrounds are as varied as the activities they offer to the children. Each staff member has expertise in working with children and experience in other camp or recreational programs. Staff members meet weekly with the director to discuss weekly programming, home group time, issues in child development, and individual experiences of the previous week. There is daily supervision of the staff by the director in the form of informal discussions and suggestions. Formal staff supervision conferences are held several times during the year with each staff member. In addition, knowledge and experience are shared at meetings with staff members from other Brookline Extended Day programs.

The director is responsible for the overall management of the program. Specific daily duties include curriculum planning, enrollment and intake procedures, purchasing, and staff training and supervision. Ongoing duties include conferences with parents, school principals and teachers; arrangements for activities outside the center; and program evaluation and development. The director works closely with the staff, acting as a facilitator and resource person as well as liaison between the staff and the Board of Directors of the program. As time permits, the director participates in and leads daily activities.

As we near the close of the first year of the Brookline After-School Special, we find ourselves evaluating our experience. A number of issues, most of which were anticipated prior to the start of the program, have proved to be important. They are included here to highlight some of the underlying questions and everyday concerns involved in after-school day care for an older age group of children.

Setting priorities for an after-school program was a major concern of the director from the beginning, as she was hired only two weeks before the program was to start. Her first major assumption was that the most important ingredient in a successful program would be a talented staff. Once the staff was hired, the director would have their support in molding the daily program. Within a week six staff members were hired, each with a specific expertise and all together able to provide a balanced program. The last week was spent planning the space, determining the format of the daily schedule, determining equipment and supply needs, discussing activity ideas and the philosophies of after-school day care, and thereby getting to know one another in a sharing, productive way.

One of the first questions brought up for discussion in the planning week was, "What are we doing here?" Each staff member shared his or

her reasons for taking the job and we found that a common motivation was the desire to help plan a new program for older children. More questions arose from this common ground -- questions like "What do we want to say to children?" and "How do we best say it?" We took these questions very seriously, for we knew that we were creating not only different activities for children but also an atmosphere in which to do the activities. In order to approach these ideas, focus questions were raised. We needed to determine our feelings about discipline, safety, competition, structure versus openness, and variety and choice. Aware of the "testing" which would occur and the comparisons children would make between our program and their prior day care experiences, we wanted an approach consistent among all staff members.

We talked about using the term "after-school" as opposed to "day-care" and about the growth in independence and self awareness among children of this age group. We talked about working mothers, single parent families and the feelings that some children might have of being shuffled from one place to another during the day. Most likely we would be the final stop on the schedule. Many children might be tired, frustrated, and even angry at what had occurred earlier at home or at school. Others might display a burst of energy and require an outlet for that. And still others might desire a quiet, yet structured, activity. (From day to day, from child to child, this proved to be the case.) In any case, after putting ourselves in the children's shoes, we felt it was clear that each child would not want or need the same kind of afternoon.

Variety and choice became a key to the program. In addition to satisfying different needs, we wished to encourage children to learn to make choices, to try new things, and to be more responsible for themselves. More decisions were made, ranging from the use of fresh cheese, fruits, and vegetables for snacks to the use of recycled materials and old furniture as opposed to new, more efficient equipment. We decided to let the children's choices of activities determine their division into groups. In other words, the children were not to be divided according to age, sex, or ability, but instead were to be allowed to group according to their interests. This plan worked and we were delighted to find a mix of ages, sexes, and talents in most activities during the year.

Because a maximum effort was made in this initial stage, the start of the program went smoothly. As is usually the case, some children were confused and uneasy about coming to a new place. Parents were also concerned, but because the staff had participated in the planning, they collectively felt secure and this was successfully conveyed to parents and children.

Another important concern was the fact that precedents would be set in the first year. In other words, policies and attitudes set within the first year would be difficult to change and therefore should be well thought out in advance. So a "keep it simple" approach was maintained, one in which an emphasis was placed on observing children's interests, listening, and not "biting off more than one could chew." One result of this was that formal volunteer and student teaching programs were deferred until the second year, when there would be time to develop a good

program with adequate supervision. Also the purchase of major equipment, other than certain necessary items, was delayed in order to determine the best allocation of funds according to the interests of children and staff.

A third factor involved the needs of parents, and the impact of the program on participating families. In a general sense, a policy of individual, personalized attention was maintained, with allowance for flexibility in children's scheduling. Because finances were of great concern to parents, care was taken to avoid additional "field trip" charges -- parents were never asked to contribute money for a trip. All expenses for trips, which were a major part of the program, came out of the weekly budget.

As we tried to keep parents' interests in mind, we were troubled by a lack of parent participation and feedback. In essence, we had neither. Intellectually, we could understand why. Parents were busy and tired and most sent their children home via our transportation at the end of the day. In addition, the children were older and more responsible. The children were ready to accept more independence and many parents were ready to give it. Unfortunately, however, some parents had never even seen the program. We wondered what this lack of involvement was saying to the children. Could children be proud of and want to attend a program in which their parents had no involvement? The lack of parent/staff interchange began to affect staff morale. Our job was a difficult one that required us to juggle the varied interests and moods of the children, many of whom were tired after a long day. It was obvious that the staff needed encouragement from the parents as well as contact with parents that could help them better understand the children. This became a familiar topic for discussion at the weekly staff meeting. Parent/child/staff get-togethers were planned, a monthly newsletter was established, and some parent conferences took place, but there remained an obvious lack of reinforcement from the parents. The problem is yet unresolved and may very well be one inherent in our operation. Although a "parent-run" organization, the program is really self-contained and self-sustaining and it may be that staff support will have to come solely from within.

A final area of relevance is that of community relations. It was important that the community become aware of the After-School Special, from a service as well as a public relations point of view. Therefore, articles were written periodically in local newspapers, flyers were distributed to all third through sixth grade children in December and June, and local agencies were notified of our existence. The director met with other Extended Day Program directors and joined various committees dealing with child related matters within the area.

Next year will mark the beginning of a new phase in the After-School Special Program. Now that a strong foundation has been set, the director and staff can start to build. Attention will be turned towards designing the space, incorporating more variety in program planning, and increasing parent communication. The staff now has a better understanding of the needs and concerns of our children. We know how to proceed.

From Heaven to Earth: The Story of Three Years in an After-School Center in an Industrial Park

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This model of after school care is not unique in its foundations. Like most program models it came into being through a happy mixing of the founder's philosophy, the particular needs of the community it served, and the environment in which the program actually took place. Some similar mixture must be the basis of all programs which get beyond the planning stage. There never should be an exact recipe. Founders' philosophies vary, as do community needs and available environments. Thus, the mixture of these three ingredients will always produce a unique program.

If there is anything that can be copied about the foundations of this particular model, it is the belief, on the part of the founders, that the program should meet the developmental and societal needs of the children and their families. We saw the children and their familes as the important variable, and tried to plan a program and an environment to fit their needs wherever possible, rather than trying to fit children into a preconceived program or setting.

The program was unique in the following ways:

- It provided after-school care in one large room for children ages 3 to 14.
- It was housed in a warehouse in an industrial park.
- It served both working and non-working parents.
- It accepted all children who applied, for whom funding could be found. This included non-English speaking children and children with special needs.
- The physical environment was planned, arranged and often built by the children themselves, with expert assistance from adults.
- The program model attempted to bring children into contact with adult work places whenever appropriate.

It is hoped that the following description of the program will allow the reader to distill some of the essential elements which go into any healthy, productive after-school program, and at the same time allow identification of those features of the program that may be specific to industrial parks, or to low-income, suburban communities like the one in which it was located.

First, it is necessary to look at the children, their homes and their community. If we pretend to be a friendly, curious giant who has temporarily removed the roofs of houses, schools, office buildings, stores, and factories in the suburban city where the program was initiated, this is what would be seen if we looked down on weekday afternoons: The people would be grouped mostly according to age and size and often according to sex. Adult men and women would be busy in factories, offices and stores. Usually there would be more men in offices and more women in stores; the men's offices would tend to be bigger than the women's offices. Depending on the nature of the factory its workers would be predominantly men or women. The giant would note some small children in the stores shopping with their mothers, and some older children buying sweets of one kind or another as an after-school treat. A few children would remain in the schools to be tutored, or to participate in a particular after-school activity, or be detained as punishment for undesirable behavior. Others would be at the library or at special schools for dancing, music and gymnastics. Some, depending on the weather, would be at parks playing ball, swinging, sliding, running, shouting. Children under five would be at day care centers, or in their own or neighbors' homes or yards. Children of elementary school age would also be at home, but not always with an adult in the house.

A closer look by the giant, to discover what the children were doing in their homes, would reveal that most of the older children (ages twelve to fourteen) and many of the younger ones were lying, sprawling or sitting in front of a box which had an ever changing picture flashing from one side. Children would be seen watching all afternoon with short breaks for refreshments or arguments over which program to watch. Many children would stay there from the time school ended until supper. Some would eat their supper with eyes glued to the box.

The scene viewed by our hypothetical giant was the after-school situation at the home site of the program, and in most small cities and suburbs during the early seventies when this after-school center opened. The situation would differ somewhat in rural places where the adults might be in the fields and woods, and the children more isolated except for the time spent on buses. A survey of parents of children enrolled in the two nearby elementary schools and one parochial school had indicated: 1) that there were many children whose parents worked, or would like to work, but who had no one to care for their children after school hours; and 2) that even in situations in which parents were at home, the children felt they had nothing to do except watch television. Since it is estimated that American children will watch 15,000 hours of TV before they are eighteen, one can be reasonably certain today that passive viewing of an often unreal world is frequently substituting for active participation in the real world of the child's community.

The research and development firm that originally sponsored the After-School Center is in an industrial park which lies midway between two public schools, one of which has a Title I program, an indication that there is a sizable population of families of low socioeconomic status. The homes are mostly modest single-family dwellings. A few apartments and tenements are scattered among the stores on the main streets. The area is

predominantly Italian; so many parents and grandparents are unable to speak English that one school sends home communication in both Italian and English.

There are meagerly equipped parks near the two schools. A Boys' Club provides some recreation programs, but little is available for girls. There is a small branch library. The major streets are so filled with traffic that they are a deterrent to young children who might otherwise go to parks and the library unaccompanied.

The sponsor of our program (a euphemism for the group, firm, school, club, settlement house or other social agency that acquires funds for the program, dispenses them, and either plans the program or hires someone to plan it) is housed in remodeled, old brick buildings at one end of a long industrial park. The people work in small but comfortable offices, situated on three floors. As in the rest of the city, the biggest offices are occupied by men, while some women (secretaries) work grouped fairly closely together in larger rooms. Telephones ring, people have conferences, reports are written, curriculum is designed, movies are made. Most of what is happening is related to the education of children or college students, but there are no children or college students to be seen.

Like many other research and development firms previously involved in developing programs or products for children, this firm became interested in day care in the early 1970s. It was expected that with the passage of the Mondale Bill there would be funds available for day care, and firms "geared up" for this possibility. Recognizing that one of the ways to develop expertise in the day care field is to operate a center, our firm gave birth to a child care project. The birth took place, not because a business saw child care as a need for its employees or the community, but rather because they hoped to use it as a vehicle for obtaining federal funds. Of course they could not open a center if one was not needed: thus a survey was made of the parents who worked at the firm and of the nearby community families. The survey revealed a strong need for day care of all kinds. When State Office for Children funds became available for a short period (three months) it was decided to start an after-school program first, since the survey had revealed a particular need for such a service. In this city, schools close at noon on Tuesday and Thursday, which is a delight to the children, a planning time for teachers, but a nightmare for working mothers.

Once the needs survey was complete, how did we, as planners, begin? First, we tried to remind ourselves of the nature of school-age children -- what they like to do and what their problems and feelings are. We read books about them, watched them when they were unsupervised in parks, on the streets, or in their own yards, and we made home visits -- both to recruit and to find out about their families. Our observations and reading convinced us that most elementary school children need the following: 1) a parent or other friendly aduit to talk to when they wish; 2) activities which will keep them away from the unreal TV world for most of the afternoon; and 3) space and materials which they can use themselves without many restrictions. We discovered from our observations that if the above were provided, children appeared well able to take care of them-

selves. They involved themselves in learning, relaxation, exercise, introspection, and social decisions. Unfortunately they also engaged in some less desirable activities involving fighting, cruelty and vandalism.

We also noticed that the children slipped naturally from big groups (ball games, hide and seek) to more intimate smaller groups, such as the one I overheard in a back yard. Here, three children, probably eight or nine years old, spontaneously acted out dramatic scenes. For a while the sandbox became a ship. "Where are we going?" asked one boy. The reply from the leader was, "To America, of course!" (I never learned whether he was Columbus, John Smith or Sir Walter Raleigh, but clearly he was acting out some of his school learning with no prodding from adults.) This small group might break down still further as individual children would wander off by themselves to their homes to read or watch TV or finish homework or would simply kick a stone somewhat aimlessly down the street. Sometimes big kids "beat up" little kids. Sometime big kids were protective, or even helpful and nurturing with smaller children. Usually boys played with boys and girls with girls -- but not always.

Watching and analyzing these various activities and groupings, we concluded that given a safe, not too sterile environment and an adult nearby, most school-age children spontaneously plan a good after-school program. They not only vary the size of the group to meet their particular needs but alternate big muscle activities with quieter intellectual pursuits. They find social satisfaction in both small and large groups, but are also able to find things to do as individuals. That doesn't mean that we didn't also observe lonely children, emotionally disturbed children, or frightened children. In general, however, the children we observed seemed to cope well with their own lives.

Having found what children could do for themselves we had to find the best kind of adult interaction or non-interaction to let them continue to do it, and to include those children not so adept at self regulation. We also had to find the type of environment that would best support good after-school afternoon and vacation experiences for six to fourteen year olds.

In addition to providing a good program, the right kind of adult interaction, and a good place to bring this about, we were concerned with some aspects of American life that we wanted to change, or at least to start changing. This was long before the Carnegie Commission reported that, because of poverty, "One child out of four in America is being actively harmed by a 'stacked deck' created by the failings of our society."[1] But we were already aware of America's problems. The 1970 White House Conference had characterized America's families and their children as being in a state of trouble and neglect "so deep and pervasive as to threaten the future of the nation."[2] Urie Bronfenbrenner at Cornell, among others, was writing about alienation of children from their parents, community and the world of work.[3] Bronfenbrenner further quoted the report of the White House Conference on Children: "In today's world parents find themselves at the mercy of a society which imposes pressures and priorities that allow neither time nor place for meaningful activities and relations between children and adults, which downgrade the role of

parents and the functions of parenthood, and which prevent the parent from doing things he wants to do as a guide, friend and companion to his children. . . ."[4] Bronfenbrenner ended this article with "a proposal for nothing more radical than providing a setting in which young and old can simply sit and talk. . . ."[5] We decided such a place must be included in our plans.

Our observations of children both within and outside the after-school program, coupled with our readings about school-age children and the state of the American family in the seventies, led us to formulate the following philosophy and rationale:

1. Because there is a growing alienation of children and youth in American society, children need the opportunity to interact with children of different ages and with adults.

2. Because we profess to be a democratic society, not an authoritarian one, the developmental needs of children and their social community needs must always be considered in planning programs for them.

3. Because children and families have been much neglected in our society, we must halt the results of this neglect, insofar as we can, by listening to and learning from the children. After-school care staff must constantly determine children's needs by observing their actions and listening to what they have to say.

The task ahead of us was now defined. We needed a place where young and old could meet; we needed skilled staff who could maximize the children's abilities to spend their afternoons fruitfully; and we needed a program in which destructive elements could be dealt with and, hopefully, minimized. Our needs were met when a large warehouse room adjacent to the firm was made available. Staff knowledgeable about elementary school-age children were hired and readily agreed that the children themselves should prepare the room and design the program.

The first week about twelve children, ranging in age from six to fourteen, happily scrubbed walls, swept old carpets, moved a few pieces of donated furniture, and made fantastic plans about what they wanted to do with the space. They were so enchanted with this room of their own that they called it "Building Paradise." Enrollment rapidly grew to twenty children.

Cleaning accomplished, the children unanimously declared they would like a loft in the middle of the room. We complied with their wish and a graduate student from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology contributed his know-how in helping them design and build the structure. The loft was used throughout the four years of the program for a myriad of purposes few of the the adults envisioned at the start: a hiding place (to get away from kids or to get away from adults); a building place (doors, windows, screens, etc., were added or subtracted from time to time); a decorating space (drapes were hung, posts were painted and pictures were placed on the walls). Of course, most of all it was a dramatic play space.

The loft, either the raised floor or the space beneath, became a fishing wharf, a kitchen, a stage, a detective agency, a store, a psychiatrist's office, a haven for the girls to get away from the boys, a haven for the boys to get away from the girls, a place where big kids kept the little kids out, and less frequently a place where the little kids kept the big kids out. In retrospect, I am sorry that I didn't keep a daily journal just on the uses of the space. The warehouse room and the loft truly belonged to the children. No principal nor janitor nor educational director decided on use of the room and loft. Only the children, with the aid of sympathetic and respectful adults, made decisions regarding these areas.

As the program grew we felt the need to divide the room into activity areas which would provide better work spaces. A carpenter, with help from the children, built a counter and shelf space near the donated stove. Cooking was always a favorite activity. Woodworking was a close second, so we built a work bench and a place to store tools. Next in popularity were arts and crafts materials. Here we found that people skilled in arts and crafts were as important to children of this age as those who were knowledgeable about their developmental needs.

The children wanted to be able to build real things that would not come apart. They wanted to learn craft techniques -- macrame, mural painting, pottery, and the like. We hired a professional artist as a staff member. Fathers who worked on the city maintenance staff were our best source of lumber and carpentry know how. Crafts people from various other projects at the firm taught children how to weave, take pictures and develop prints. Singing was popular whenever we had a singing staff member. One of the janitors in the industrial park liked this activity too, and would often join us.

Three activities occurred every day of the program. Costing virtually nothing, they were rarely planned, but because they were constantly included they must have been essential for the children. One was dramatic play. Another was a chance for children to talk to adults, particularly about things that were troubling them. The third I will name as I describe it below.

The importance of dramatic play was brought to our attention by a particular group of children. Included in our program, and in many after-school programs that are not selective in enrollments, were many children with only a mother in the home, a few children who were known to be troublemakers at school and one child who had been abused by her mother. These children with problems particularly need to act out their feelings -- sometimes in socially acceptable ways, sometimes not. The favorite afternoon activity for the abused child, who had spent many hours visiting with counselors and social workers, was to play Doctor's Office. She would set up an inner office under the loft, and take on the role of the Doctor. In front of her office was a receptionist's desk usually presided over by a younger child, who had been convinced by the "Doctor" that "receptionist" was an important task. The "Doctor" would then drum up business by asking children and staff to bring their problems to her. Often she got real problems. A visiting parent asked for help to stop smoking; an eleven year old boy compiained that his mother wouldn't let him see his father.

Not all dramatic play was as constructive or as therapeutic. There were monsters and super-heroes and continuations of neighborhood family arguments. But there was an obvious need, every day, for some children to have time and a place to act out strong feelings. Regimented programs of recreational activities rarely allow for this. We felt that props, place, time, and space for this sort of activity were essential to allow for its fulfillment.

The second activity -- adult-child conversation -- was explicitly initiated by the children themselves. When we began planning the program, we had in mind children ages six through twelve. In interviewing parents we discovered they were particularly concerned about their Junior High School age children. We consequently decided to extend the age range to fourteen. (When these participants became ninth graders, we invited them to become aides, and in some instances, we were able to pay them through high school work study programs.) It was the older girls who first asked us if they could talk to us. With their favorite staff member, in a private place, they would talk about sex, their relationships with their parents, and neighborhood feuds. These were hard topics for the staff to deal with. But we tried. Just as with dramatic play, the need for serious conversation, especially among the older children, seemed insatiable.

We had set the stage for the third activity. We were not, however, prepared for the amount of time and intensity with which it was pursued. I guess it should be called "relating to other age groups." We had decided from the start not to group children according to age or sex. Thus we did invite this activity. It manifested itself in many ways. As one would expect, the older girls often wanted to help with the younger children. (I should add here that after about three weeks in operation, two parents asked us to take younger siblings -- age four. We lowered our age range to meet the families' needs, and never regretted it.) The older girls at other times wanted to tease them or manipulate them. Family loyalties were exceptionally strong among the children. If an older child insulted someone's younger sibling, this was almost bound to result in a fight. Sometimes temporary places were built to "keep the little kids out." But invariably, when a bigger child was a builder and had a younger sibling, an exception was made for that sibling. Most older children enjoyed "teaching" something to younger children -- songs, craft skills, cooking. We also found that the emotionally disturbed youngsters were most drawn to the physically handicapped. Our most difficult to handle eight year old boy became a tender compassionate teacher when he tried to teach a child with cerebral palsy how to climb a ladder. For a while we had a six year old mentally retarded child. The older children would beg us for a turn to "play" with him so they could try to teach him a word or a skill. I am convinced that these three activities would not have arisen, nor proven so important to the children, if we had not decided at the start to mix age groups.

What about our plan to introduce children to the adult world of work, and to the community in which they lived? Here, we were only partially successful. Project heads at the firm always said they would cooperate in inviting children to their offices, but most busy program directors under-

standably do not want children in the office when deadlines for proposals or reports are approaching. For the most part, the more routine the job that the adult was doing, the more that adult welcomed having children participate. The man who delivered the mail, a grandfatherly type, was delighted to have a child go with him, and the children loved going. The secretaries let the children photocopy, collate and staple. The janitor, as I mentioned before, joined us for singing. Parents who were staff often came over for lunch or snacks. Some of the other industries in the park let us tour their buildings, and one parent who was a fireman gave us great tours of the fire station. (The son of this fireman made one of our favorite childhood threats. Instead of the usual, "If you don't do what I say, my father will beat you up," he substituted, "My father will let your house burn down if it gets on fire!")

Occasionally, professional staff at the firm tried out new curriculum ideas and new teaching techniques with our children. The children were invited to paint a mural on a whole wall in a large room occupied by a Follow Through Project. However, the amount of interchange between adults outside the center and children within the center was not as great as we had hoped. It took constant prodding on our part to bring working adults and children together.

Our relations with the local schools and community were easier and more productive. We urged children to use the community. Trips to the parks and the library were frequent. Children certainly read more, and got to know better literature, as a result of this. Children who wanted to participate in sports at the Boys' Club, or to take music lessons, or to do errands for their parents were encouraged to do so. Children who were having trouble at school, either with learning or with discipline, were a special challenge. We found that we were often a catalyst for getting parents, teachers, and guidance counselors together to plan some consistent way of working with a child. We helped children with homework if the child or the parents requested this and a couple of children with learning disabilities were referred to us by the school system for extra help with reading or perceptual skills.

Thus far I have described the program which lasted for three years. I think it is fair to judge it as being rich, varied and based on the needs of the children. However, any evaluation of the program needs to consider the problems we experienced. What were they? For one thing, we had a problem keeping track of the children -- then again we often had a problem getting them to leave. Since we urged them to participate in the community, and to be independent, we almost invited these problems. Sometimes the children took off without telling us. One boy was finally traced to his home when he failed to appear at the center. He was making pancakes (something <u>we</u> had taught him to do) for two young friends! We kept a huge chart each week, that told us which children were going where and when, and whether they were allowed to go alone or needed someone to accompany them. We had to send staff out in two directions to the different schools to meet the kindergarteners and other young children who couldn't walk to the center alone. At closing time there were invariably children who didn't want to leave. It was fun to tease us and get more attention (in some homes supper time was not a very happy place)

and, of course, transitions are difficult for most people. After four hours of relating intensely to twenty-five children, we found this one of our more exasperating problems. We wanted to go home even if the children did not.

We had some children who appeared to be exhibiting close to delinquent behavior both in and out of the center. Sometimes we helped those children. Other times we just helped their parents or counselors. After an hour long conversation with one child's psychiatrist, for example, the psychiatrist remarked, "I don't know whether I've help you understand J. any better, but you have certainly helped me." Since he saw J. only one hour a week and we saw him every day after school, it is not surprising that we had a lot more information about J. than he did.

In the end it became clear that our greatest problem was that we were not loved and nurtured, except for a brief period at the start, by our sponsor. Foreign visitors, local educators and leaders from social agencies often gave us much encouragement and lots of tender loving care. The local Council for Children was supportive both financially and professionally. Research and development firms, no matter that the materials and documents they produce are for and about children, are not warm or friendly places to children or their caregivers. Their goal, as they reminded us again and again, was to bring in funds, not to provide services. When this became increasingly apparent we invited the parents to form a corporation and to take over the sponsorship and financing of a new center which we named Plowshares. The building in which it was housed was a handsome old brick building, so old that it was said to have been a storage place for gunpowder during the Civil War. We had not exactly turned our swords into plowshares, but we had transformed the use of the building from housing deadly explosives to providing a space for children to play and grow.*

It is clear that we have a long way to go before we can persuade most businesses to allow time for child/adult interaction at any place other than home, and then often only in the most limited way. While I was trying to bring about opportunities for young and old to get together, my own three young children, in another part of the same city, were being deprived of a father at supper, because a large local university insisted he teach education courses three evenings a week. It appears that the very people who are writing and lecturing about children are often too busy to be with them.

It will be a long time before communities and working places will actively seek imaginative ways to fit in children. Consequently, children, for the most part, have no better occupation than to stay on the streets or in parks with limited, sterile equipment, or watch TV, or get into trouble. Trouble, as we all know, comes as an invitation to children when there are not enough appealing, productive things to do from which they can gain recognition and satisfaction.

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*The program continued in the industrial park for another year. It is now operating in a public school in the same city.

Perhaps after-school caregivers can show communities the way. Persons planning programs should insist on sites that children can manage -- warehouse rooms, adventure playgrounds, schoolrooms that are not overly controlled by administrative o. maintenance staff, churchrooms that are not controlled by persons who spend only an hour or two in the building on Sundays. Businesses and apartment complexes need to be forced to provide good space for children of all ages, and as Bronfenbrenner suggested almost a decade ago, "nothing more radical than providing a setting in which young and old can simply sit and talk . . ." I expect that he would agree that in addition to providing the setting, we need to allow adults some time to use it.

The US government has just spent millions of dollars studying the appropriate teacher/pupil ratio and class size for day care centers. It appears more millions may be spent to study Child Care Information and Referral Centers thoughout the nation. These Information Centers, like the Research Centers and the Colleges of Education, will publish directories, make phone calls, provide consultation about children, but rarely, if ever, relate to them directly. The staff of such centers will be concerned with cost efficiency and proposals for funding. Establishing the best programs for children may be of only minor importance.

We have had child labor laws in the USA for a good many years. We do not put children in factories in dangerous situations any more nor do we send them into coal mines. Rather, we appear to use them in a more subtle capacity. Their very existence makes jobs for adults, who then do not have time to be with them. Thus, the children must find their way through a profusion of ridiculous TV programs or a maze of often dangerous streets, or if they are fortunate, spend their afternoons in day care programs. Some of these will be so restricted by distant adults that the children's basic developmental needs will not be considered.

If this situation is to change, more government funding must go directly to day care services, where the kids themselves have shown us how to use it. If twenty-five kids can find "Paradise" in an old warehouse with some adults who take time to talk with them, then it is indeed possible to provide good quality day care for a reasonable expenditure of funds. The key requirement is that programs be based on the realities of children's lives--governed not by the dictates of distant "sponsors" but by the needs and ideas of the children involved.

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Family Day Care and the School-Age Child

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Introduction

In recent years there has been increased awareness of the needs of the school-age child -- before school, after school, and at other times when parents are working and need care for their children. Most discussion of the subject seems to focus on group care, in after-school programs designed to serve large groups of children. However, family day care is and has always been an important alternative for children, including those of school age. The reasons that parents choose to place a child with a caregiver in the neighborhood are varied. There may be no formal day care center available. A family day care home may be preferred because it is close to the child's home, because siblings can attend together, because attendance costs are reasonable, or because parents perceive family day care as an intimate setting in which their children can experience a home-like feeling on their return from school. Some parents of children with special needs may opt for family day care because there is no alternative readily available which is staffed adequately to care for their children. Family day care may offer the school-age child an opportunity to participate in neighborhood activities, to play with schoolmates in the local playground, to develop relationships with the provider's own children and with younger children in his or her care, and in general, to become a part of a family unit involved in the everyday tasks and activities which are part of family life.

Some questions do arise about how well suited the family day care home may be to the school-age child's growing need for autonomy and mobility. How much freedom can providers afford to allow an older child if they have their hands full with caregiving for preschoolers or babies as well as managing a household? What are the legal implications for a provider who may not be available to supervise an older child who is hurt in a playground accident or in a street fight with older children? Finally, can a family day care home provide "creative programming" to meet the developing interests and skills of the older child?

These and other issues were discussed by a group of participants in a workshop at the Wheelock Conference on School-Age Child Care.* The workshop participants included family day care providers affiliated with

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*The author would like to thank the workshop participants for ther contribution to this article.

family day care systems in the Greater Boston area, administrators of a family day care system which also operates a school-age day care center, and others working in the child care field who were especially interested in day care for the school-age child. In this article, portions of the workshop discussion will be presented in an attempt to capture the flavo of the dialogue about the role of family day care for school-age children.

Participants' Observations

If there was one point upon which all participants agreed, it was the potential for nurturance that exists in a family day care setting. This was expressed by one participant, a family day care provider, who perceived her "extended family" in the following way:

> Mostly it's nice that you're there when they come back from school and you can listen to what their needs are and try to zero in on them and maybe follow through. It might be that one little fellow that we had wasn't really into sports so much. He was great with writing and drama and we had a little girl in the home at the same time who was a great actress. So we put our kids up in the library and they did their little thing up there which was great. We had another boy who was just fantastic at baseball; he was into Little League and he would come home and tell us all about it. We had another little boy and he was just great for Jerry, our Little League ball player. He taught Sam how to play ball. A little bit of all the children rubs off on all the other children . . . I think as a day care provider you love the children as your own. And when they hit a home run you're thrilled. You're thrilled when they come home and read you the story they did at the library. You're just thrilled with them, period.

This woman not only saw her own contribution to the lives of the children in her care, but felt that her family itself was enriched by the presence of other children in their everyday lives. For her, family day care offered an opportunity to do productive work for others as well as to receive substantial personal reward.

How do the provider's own children feel about their parent's relationship with other children who come into their home each day? One provider related her experience as one in which everyone in the family gained:

> I have my kids say to me, "You give more attention to Carolyn than you do the others." But we talked about it, so for me that was a growth experience, and it was so we could see that all children are different and need different things. And my children grew because they could say, "We understand this." And they verbalized it.

Being a family day care provider is not always easy, but as another provider (previously an elementary school teacher in the public school system) pointed out, the frustrations of the work are often balanced by the rewards.

> They [children] need nurturing and attention, that is what family day care can do better than any other system. The second day I was into family day care my husband found me in bed crying. The dog had cut his paw, one of my day care kids was in the hospital with suspected muscular dystrophy, and a third had come in from first grade and ripped all the curtains off, and I thought, "I can't do this!" It was the most difficult job and the most rewarding. I thought I had a sensitivity to kids before I took this job. I can't explain how I changed as a person from this job. It just did me more of a favor; it was the most rewarding.

Family day care providers experience a unique relationship with the parents of the children in their care: the provider quoted above felt differently about parents as a family day care giver then she had as an elementary school teacher:

> When I was a young teacher I thought the worst part of teaching was parents. They would just leave me alone. I came to day care with a suburban attitude. And the attitude was why didn't mothers stay home like I had always done to take care of their little children? I ended up with a great respect for parents who are trying to make it, sometimes against incredible odds and who need you sometimes as much as they need their kids to have care . . . i had one mother who called me up at 8 o'clock one night and asked what kind of pants did I buy for my three sons. That is one area that you have to learn to deal with again and again.

Conversely, one of the workshop participants, a day care administrator whose school-age child was being cared for in a family day care home, offered a parent's perspective of family day care:

> As a parent in a family day care arrangement, the tie that I have with the women who cares for my child is a very close one. That person is spending about eight hours a day with Joseph, knows all of the events that occur in the course of his daily life and could talk about them in a sincere way -- how they relate to another child or her own child. The view that we have is of a very secure arrangement.

Further comments indicated that parents may feel freer to discuss a child's problems with a family day care provder than with a teacher in a school situation. As one participant stated:

> We all have feelings about schools as institutions, feelings very often of anxiety when we have to go to a school to talk to a second grade teacher about our child because of our own sort of personal hidden agenda on school and what it meant to us!

Children with special needs requiring one-to-one care may gain a great deal from being in a family day care home. However, it was acknowledged by the workshop participants that some children may be too much to handle and that it is important to know the limits of one's ability to deal with such children:

> I had Daniel for over a year and eventually he had to be let go because he became so abusive to himself and others. But what I would try to do was always be tuned into Daniel. Now this is very difficult because you had two coming home from school. I had Daniel and sometimes I had another one . . . but I really think I developed a way to handle this. Often times Daniel and I would go to the bathroom and he would have his tantrum. He really needed family day care. He could not exist in a large after-school program. He just never would have survived. He would tear the school apart, he would run away from school. The point I guess I want to make is that Daniel knew that I loved him, no matter what he did, he knew that my family loved him and that I loved him. I think that helped him. Now, as a public school teacher, I have one child who comes into school at 7:30 every morning. We cannot get rid of him in the afternoon. He wanders the streets until 8:30 every night. But if I put my arms around him, that is all he wants, and yet everyone in the system has named him as a street kid and trouble. This kid desperately needs some kind of family situation.

The situations described here imply the necessity for an intense and careful response to children's needs. I would argue that system-affiliated family day care, rather than individual day care providers working in isolation, best meets these needs by alleviating some of the stress placed on working parents in locating care and by insuring high quality control for parents, children, and provider. The family day care providers in the workshop discussion were affiliated with family day care systems in their communities. While it is estimated that family day care is the most widely used form of child care across the country, only 5% of all children in day care are in family day care homes affiliated with a system which provides administrative and social service support, education and training. As one family day care system administrator put it:

> Quality control is more difficult with family day care because they're all out there in the field and you don't see them all the time. There are three factors that are directly related to that issue. One is selection. Selection is the most important factor in establishing quality family day care programs. Second is home visiting which is a combination of monitoring and providing support, and the third factor is training, which is no more than a refining process because if you haven't done a good job with selection then your training isn't going to do a lot. The average contact with homes is more than once a week. The contact takes on a number of flavors. There is to some extent an element of monitoring quality but more importantly there is the consultative relationship that is established.
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> The people from central services are there as resource people, people who can give assistance to develop new programs and meet very concrete needs in terms of working with a parent-provider relationship. We are involved in a continuous evaluation process where we take independent parent evaluations, both formal written evaluations and informal interview evaluations, and then the providers participate in the process.

> There is a fourth item that is extremely important, second only to selection of providers, and that is careful placement. Parents are constantly calling and saying, "I started work yesterday, can you take my kid on Monday," and you say, "No, it takes three or four weeks to make a good placement," and that causes a lot of visits, taking the child to the provider, the parent to the provider, the child to the other children and so on. Three people have to accept placement -- the parent, the provider, and we have to accept it and you observe the child and how he or she reacts and a child will let you know too. The parent is making a choice but the kid is making a choice too.

Homes connected with each other through a system can be an enormous source of support to family day care givers. This "network of reciprocity" of ideas, tasks, and information adds an important dimension to the everyday work of taking care of children:

> We built up this great friendship between day care mothers, and this other woman became very friendly with me and we had this mixed group that would meet with school-age children as well as younger children and we would go to a beach sometimes, and she would watch the big ones and I would take care of the little ones. We would also go to the park and she would watch mine and I would watch hers.

Such mutuality can form the basis for placement decisions by system administrators:

> The clustering of homes is something which enters into decisions that we make about placements of school-age kids. Particularly, our interest is to see that they are in areas where they are going to be in contact with friends from school or where they are going to establish some relationships with kids so that there will be some free play or some free movement available between homes out of the cooperative relationship between caregivers.

Family day care systems can make a significant difference in the lives of children who experience stressful times in their development. The system approach to networking resources, sharing information, and building consistent problem-solving mechanisms was illustrated by one provider as follows:

> There was one child whom I had for six years, Hector, and he is a child who would have slipped through the cracks and been lost if he had been in any situation other than family day care. He was a child whom I watched when he would have to stay a half-hour after school and another boy would be waiting there to beat him up. He was a boy who was getting kicked out of boy scouts; a lunchroom aide was quitting because she couldn't stand him. His mother was throwing her hands up in disgust. He was just one of those kids, but he was the most loving kid if you gave him a chance, of all the kids I've ever known. And because he went into day care and we could see the things that were happening to

> him, all of a sudden I said, "I don't think I could stand in that kid's shoes, what are we going to do?" So between Robert (the System Director), I, and the other staff, they went to the school principal and got the whole big conglomeration started -- it was almost like Chapter 766* before it started -- and we got help for Hector who was acting out in school because he wouldn't give anyone the satisfaction of saying, "I can't do it." And he was the most creative kid with building things. We used to reward him with building things and it was like a miracle had happened because next year this Hector who was a drop out for sure, got an A in science. Today Hector is fourteen years old and he is going into a vocational school because he can do so many things with his hands. And he's the type of child that even till today when I went to his fourteenth birthday party, he gave me a kiss and said, "I've never outgrown it."

As the workshop discussion developed, it became clear that the concept of creative programming, so much a part of the thinking and planning in school-age, center-based programs, was perceived as an integral part of everyday activities in the family day care home. While recognizing the importance of allowing children access to different experiences outside of the home, providers expressed the view that children needed and wanted to be a part of an environment which as much as possible approximated a real family setting. Systems which operate a center as well as satellite family day care add an extra favorable dimension to the home setting by providing kids with opportunities to engage in some structured activities to which they would not ordinarily have access due to transportation problems, additional costs, and the limited supervisory time of the family day care provider whose time has to be shared by younger children in her care.

One provider remarked that older children need to be part of a community -- mowing a lawn for example, or washing a car. These children need to feel that their input is valuable not only to their own families but also to the community in general. In designing a program for center-based, school-age day care, consideration should be given to these activities as well as to the unplanned and naturally occurring experiences often found in family day care homes. The comments of two workshop participants seem pertinent to this argument. The first comments by a day care provider illustrate the value of a relaxed, home base atmosphere, while the second set of comments by an administrator of a school-age center (which had added satellite family day care to the center program) indicates how the above considerations can form the basis of the programming process.

> Do we have to structure everything kids do? I think we need to teach them how to play, to be able to sit, and be quiet; to just "hang out" or get into dramatic play. I had one child who would take a sleeping bag and cuddle up in a corner in my dining room. Somehow I feel that that would not have happened in a center-based program. She would not have had the freedom to find out what was hers.

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*Massachusetts legislation mandating special education services.

> We defined the goals of our school-age program as trying to provide experience for the children that is similar to what they would normally experience -- going home from school, throwing their jacket on the floor and taking off to play for a while. And then a number of times a week they would go to the after-school children's program or cub scouts or girl scouts, brownie troop, or to a recreational program -- baseball or basketball. We tried to base our programs on where a child would go on different days, and we used parents to chauffeur the kids back and forth.

Providing an environment in which kids can feel part of the community and the neighborhood is difficult. Family day care providers expressed concern about the tension between wanting to allow kids freedom to, for example, ride their bikes in the local playground, and fearing their liability should an accident occur -- liability with respect to both legal and emotional issues.

> You never see a parent sued if they send their kid to the store and he gets hurt, but if it's a center or a family day care home, then they feel that you are negligent. It seems that if you're willing to take the risks with other children that you take with your own children, and you take normal risks in sending them to the store, then you could be open to liability.

Insurance liability coverage can offer some security for those operating family day care systems and for associations of independent providers. Release forms are also a necessity, although it is unclear how much weight a parent release form has in court should a provider be sued in a negligence action. Insurance costs are drastically increasing. In Massachusetts in 1979, insurance for family day care homes quadrupled because of alleged abuse cases associated with some foster care homes. According to one family day care system director, these incidents have caused insurance companies to "drop family day care like a hot potato, and those of us who renewed our insurance then had to pay four times as much."

Centers serving school-age children may also experience some of the same difficulties: if a center-based program defines "normalcy" as one goal for children coming to a day care center after school, then that center is faced with the same concerns about setting limits as is the family day care provider.

> We can't let one person go here, another go there. There are too many children and not enough staff and not enough transportation, and the transportation costs in a group program are incredible. We find that we have to bring all fifteen kids down to the music program! It is a terrific program but not all fifteen kids are highly motivated for it. So we let some kids stand by and then we have another problem. Several more want to stay back and then nobody wants to go. This is the underlying tension. Most of the time when we get there everybody enjoys it -- but it's not natural.

These comments by a program director demonstrate a desire for a "natural life" approach for children in a program -- and an awareness that the logistics of center-based programming may not always be in harmony with the rights of children to explore their own power in terms of making decisions about how to spend time. The center-based program described in the following quotation is presently considering a switch to family day care. In doing so program staff are reflecting on the best way to meet the program's goals for children -- a relaxed and enriching environment which comes as close as possible to everyday family life.

> I think we are running as good a program as we can possibly run. Our kids get drama and music experience once a week and gymnastics once a week; they go to the library every other week at least, participate in the storytelling; we do plays, we have a drama coordinator, we do sports; they're doing an incredible number of things, they are getting experience in a lot of areas, but we're not satisfied, we do not define it as what these kids need. What we need to see is those experiences given to kids in a more flexible, relaxed, home base atmosphere.

Another workshop participant related his experiences as a program director with a center-based program which did make a changeover to family day care. From this administrator's point of view, the change was necessary to provide maximum service to the children in the area -- the center approach did not satisfy the demand for child care and was constrained by limitations of space and budget. The effect of this change was an immediate increase in the program's ability to serve more children, due to freedom from constant concerns about the facility, the narrow scope of service due to transportation limitations, and the anxiety that the program would never be sufficiently staffed to deal with children in a way that consistently met their needs.

> We found that we were all of a sudden freed from a lot of problems. We didn't have to worry how a kid was going to get from school across Main Street and down a couple of blocks at a key corner. We found that we had day care homes, and in fact clusters of family day care homes, that we could identify within the key school areas that we were servicing. We found that now we weren't limited to serving the needs of two schools but we could really group around a half dozen schools. Our capability in the community was greatly enhanced. We found that increasing the number of hours of our service played an important role in the kind of work we were doing to generate support -- in effect we were marketing our services to the city as a purchaser and as an economic development activity. Being able to identify that kind of expansion and outgrowth is a terrific improvement. Very quickly we started getting good feedback from parents who had initially expressed anxiety about the move away from that concrete identifiable facility to something more "invisible." It was an arrangement where you could start doing some of those things that are good principles for school-age child care which come so hard when you have to hassle with the realities of contracts, staffing, facilities, cash flow. Now there is a stable family and neighborhood

> base, and you can talk about kids really going out and pursuing normal neighborhood activities rather than doing some crazy organizational activity just for the sake of doing it at a center-based program.

This changeover from center to family day care homes seemed to meet many needs. It was not, as some have suggested, any cheaper. The rates for both programs were very close ($1.10 and $1.20/hr), and usually any cost differential is immediately spent on provider salaries and benefits.

Conclusion

For the school-age child, most family day care facilities offer a close, family environment to come home to after school. For many children and families, it is the best child care alternative, especially in cases in which children experience school as a stressful situation or when the child's emotional needs necessitate a one-to-one relationship with a caregiver. Family day care is not without problems; the stresses involved in caring for children can sometimes be overwhelming. Providers are concerned with the necessity of setting limits, while at the same time recognizing that school-age children, especially older children, must be able to explore their universe without too much constraint. Constraint, however, seems necessary -- both because of concern about liability and because of the economy of the provider's time. Allowing a school-age child freedom to move about in the community requires more, rather than less, supervision by the provider. Still, for the provider in a family day care system, giving in-home child care is personally gratifying work. For a day care administrator, family day care seems to fulfill some of the goals for school-age child care that may be hard to meet in a center-based program. In general, the participants in this workshop acknowledged that family day care, especially when supported by resources from a system represents a valuable child care option for parents, children, and caregivers.

Part IV: CONCLUSION

Putting It Together: Some Program and Policy Issues in School-Age Day Care

Gwen G. Morgan

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This has been an enormously stimulating conference for me. For the first time, people involved in school-age day care have come together from all over the country to compare notes. As different speakers and panelists have shared their experiences a number of common theories have emerged. At this point, I would like to share some of the impressions I have gained.

Docia Zavitkovsky's empathetic description of school-age children and their needs brought to my mind the first time I tried to think seriously about school-age day care. I was at my typewriter at home writing something, and I wanted to throw in a few paragraphs about the school-age day care of the future. I had never thought much about day care for this age group, and I felt uncertain what to write. Then I remembered that I had under my roof at that very moment three excellent consultants between the ages of seven and eleven. At once I sought them out, and asked their advice.

At first, of course, they told me there was no need for school-age day care. School-age children take care of themselves. "I know that," I told them, "but I'm here. While you're taking care of yourself, I like to be here. Parents feel someone should be around in case you need help, or in case of emergency." They agreed that that was reasonable, and they spent a few moments pondering the ideal arrangement.

This was their first suggestion. If, as I suggested, all the parents were working and there were no adults in any of the houses, then the parents should find someone and pay that person to be the adult at home for the neighborhood. It should be a person who really enjoys being with kids. When the school bus comes home, that person should be at the corner to meet the bus and to see that all the kids are on it. If any kid goes somewhere else, the kid should let that person know, either by telephoning before leaving school, or by sending a note home with another kid in the neighborhood. After all the kids get off the bus, they should decide among themselves which house to go to. The person hired by the parent would have keys to all of the homes, and would go with the kids to the house they chose that day.

I asked them, "Why not always go to the same house?" and got a scornful response. That would be boring; it wouldn't be any fun. What

they liked in life was deciding whose house to go to. Sometimes you wanted to shoot a few baskets at the Jones house, with its basketball hoop on the garage door. Sometimes you wanted to look at Ginny's paper doll collection. This particular idea did limit your choices; everybody would have to go to the same house. But the idea of going to the same house every day was totally rejected by my three consultants, and vehemently.

Trying to get them to look at it in another way, I suggested, "What if you didn't get on the bus at all? What if there were some place at or near the school where all the kids could go after school when nobody was home at their houses?" At first they didn't like that idea nearly as much as a person with keys to everybody's house, but they were willing to consider the idea. The first thing they agreed on was this: "It better be good, or we just wouldn't go there." They were not especially worried about bad after-school day care, because they had utter confidence in their own powers to reject it. Their comments reminded me of this age group's ability to "vote with their feet," by simply not participating in what they don't accept.

My interest further stimulated, I asked what a school age day care program would have to be like to meet their criterion that it "better be good." These are some of the responses I got.

"It lets you do what you want to do, not what some adult wants you to do."

"You could have your club meetings there," (this from the nine year old) "and nobody would barge in and spy on you, and nobody could tell you who had to be in the club."

"If you didn't want to go there, it would be okay to go to your friend's house. You could bring your friend here sometimes."

"If you had something important to do, you would just let them know."

"What's important?" I interrupted.

"Things like band practice, sports, a part in the school play, a job, anything like that."

"You should meet interesting people there," the eleven year old said. Questioned, he explained that although his mother doesn't work away from home her life is interesting because she invites a lot of people to their house -- people who are interesting to meet. People from Russia or Africa, people who have interesting jobs, people who have interesting ideas. He went on, "If the parents are all working, they are going to be busy, and meeting interesting people at work. The kids will need another way of meeting interesting people."

All three were very clear that "it shouldn't be like school." If it turned out to be like school, they all agreed, they just wouldn't go there. Much body language accompanied this comment: head shaking, foot stamp-

ing, fist making. What does it mean to be "like school," I asked. There are "subjects," I was told, and the adults control what the kids can do. My consultants were not anti-school, but they did not want more of the same. My own son summed up his feelings about school this way, "At school they always want you to do your best work. But some of the time I like to do my worst work."

Here at our conference, I was very impressed by Charles Jarm's feeling of responsibility to the children in day care, because this out-of-school time is, as he put it, "their time." I wish we could consider the in-school time "their time" and feel the same obligation to spend it well there too, but our culture has clearly claimed that time away from the kids. My three advisors were in tune with Jarm. They were willing to grant the schools that time (even though, as another son of mine frequently said, "it breaks up your whole day"), but they wanted to protect their autonomy in the remaining small part of the day.

We do not know a lot about school-age day care. The government has studied both center care for three to five year olds and family day care, and infant care has been reasonably well studied. However, apart from a few national studies of what parents are doing about child care while they work, overall very little is generally known about provisions for school-agers. Family Circle magazine found that a lot of seven year olds are left alone at home, even though few parents believe this age group should be left by themselves.[1]

I am involved in a federally funded study of how parents find child care. The study, known as "Project Connections," is conducted by the American Institutes for Research. As we talk with information and referral services across the country, we are getting the same story everywhere: infant care and school-age day care are in very short supply. Recently we went out and interviewed three parents in order to test our questionnaire before starting a parent survey nationally. Of the three parents we happened upon, one was leaving a six year old home alone.

One strong impression I have gained from this conference is that school-age day care is important enough to warrant much more study. I am also finding that more is known, locally, than I had thought. For example, the school system in Arlington, Virginia, has had an extended day program for a long time. In Arlington 14.2% of all the school children use the after-school program. I need figures like that. Arlington knows who uses the program, how many of what income level, how many from two-parent and one-parent families. We need to collect much more of that kind of information. We need to know who and how many will use school-age day care. The pioneering programs described at this conference have provided information of this sort, but we need much more of it, and we need it on a national scale.

From several speakers I picked up the idea that because school-age day care is only beginning to be developed, we have the advantage or being able to "start right." "Starting right" has a number of important aspects, in particular ensuring the school-age child care service is both universally accessible and of high quality. I think "starting right" with

universal accessibility is particularly important because it is very hard to broaden a program which has already begun with a narrow scope.

I think we can and should insist from the beginning that school-age day care is for all children, regardless of income or social class. Some parents can be asked to pay the full costs of day care, but no parent should be excluded. School-age day care could be a positive force on societal attitudes toward other day care programs, by extending the acceptability of the idea of universally accessible care.

At present, public understanding of what is meant by good quality day care is limited. Judith Rosen told us most people think of it as custodial. These attitudes are evident in existing practices within the school-age day care field. For example, most day-care staff are not professionally trained. I know that when I teach school-age day care administrators, their ideas reflect an amazing array of program emphases. We need extensive and standardized in-service training in school-age day care, and we need it now. But as yet, we do not have an adequate research base, to tell us what the content of that training should be.

Some years ago, I was angered and depressed by a New York Times feature story. It seems that a neighborhood had been given an excellent playground director by the city Recreation Department. Never before had the children in the neighborhood been more stimulated and excited by a playground program. The children were engaged in constructive activities -- clearing new areas and cleaning up trash. They were full of interest in the new things they were learning from their "own" adult, Joey the Clown. Joey's career ladder into this school-age playground program had been (1) a sailor in the Merchant Marines, (2) a clown in the circus, and (3) New York City playground director. Parents and children were happy with the role Joey played in their community. However, the city suddenly decided to terminate Joey as a city employee because he did not have academic training in recreation. Protests were in vain. Joey was fired. I don't think we know at this point what makes a person well suited to provide high quality of care for school-age children. We need to examine the course content and job descriptions and experiences of a number of other related fields, and to spend time in thoughtful analysis before we are ready to say that George can work in our after-school program but Joey may not. This is clearly an area for urgent and immediate study.

Everybody who spoke at the conference noted the difficulties inherent in school-age day care. These difficulties are real, and I will look at them later. What struck me more, however, is the fact that school-age day care is so much more feasible financially than group infant care or even group care of three to five year olds. Admittedly, the former is not easy to set up. There is a gap between being able to get school-age day care off the ground with parent fees and success. Without more legislation at the state or federal level, school-age day care is no lead pipe cinch.

Yet over and over, I learned, it can be done. Although some subsidy in some form is needed, the amount required is often small compared to the overall program. What has to be raised and negotiated is well with-

in the range of the feasible and possible. It might be a small grant from the county, or free space in a school building. Whatever it is, it is not large and overwhelming.

Considering the communities where school-age day care is thriving (to the extent that any day care can be said to thrive) on the basis of this conference, I have an impression that places in which school-age day care gets off the ground are rich in human resources. It takes determined parents to get a decision to support school-age day care, not only because of the need for some modest subsidy, but also because of negative attitudes towards day care. Our poorest communities have not been able to create this kind of leadership in the way that our richer communities have been able to do. The people in the poorer communities have other places to put their energies. But when there is an easier way to provide school-age day care, when there are subsidies and technical assistance, these early efforts described here will provide rich experience for expanding day care. I may be wrong, but my impression is that school-age day care, as represented here, is a phenomenon of unusually resourceful communities.

Even in those communities, it seems to take some skilled pushing to overcome what seems to be a natural school resistance to "caring." Schools vary a lot, and no generalization holds. But our day care programs reported a reluctance on the part of school personnel to share space and to take on caring functions. There was an attitude of resistance, both "blatant and subtle": low priority among school board members, turf problems. That seemed to be common.

However, schools have several motives for being interested in school-age day care. With shrinking school populations, they face a corresponding reduction in school staff. The neighborhood school concept, with schools taking on other functions to justify their existence, occupancy and staff costs, added to public concern over vandalism and of unoccupied school buildings, fosters a political climate which offers support for extended day programs. At the same time negative attitudes toward day care also exist. It takes political skill to seize the environmental opportunities and ride the tide that is favorable to school-age day care, without getting caught in the cross currents of negative biases.

These negative biases are formidable. There is a massive, organized right wing attack which uses day care as a central issue. Day care, they assert, undermines family and parent rights. Part of the anti-day care movement, and it is a movement, can be described simply in one word: "crazy." The kind of argument that is made links a lot of knee-jerk issues in strange ways. For instance: "If we celebrate the International Year of the Child, then parents will have to pay their children the minimum wage for doing household chores, and children can sue their parents for making them go to church." Crazy is the only word for that. Or, "If we pass the ERA, then parents will be forced to place their children in federally sponsored day care centers." Crazy again. But I don't believe it is simply crazy people in the United States who generate the anti-day care mail which Congress receives. (You should know that no other issue, including the war in Southeast Asia, has generated the volume of mail which the day care issue generates.) Rather, it seems to me, a small but

vociferously strong right wing is playing skillfully, on possibly legitimate fears of the general public.

In reality, I think parents are frustrated with the schools; where there have been differences in social class and values between parents and the schools, the schools' values have prevailed. Parents are anxious at the possibility that the relentless march of history preordains greater influence by schools or school-like insitutitions, and lesser influence by themselves. Even if they must work and therefore need child care, they are fearful that a professional group, with a haughty disregard for parents' values, will receive government support and will in the end further erode parents' ability to pass on their values to their children.

These are very real fears, whether we agree with them or not. If they are the feelings of some parents, that is a fact, whether or not the feelings are justified. If we want to continue to improve in the area of parent/staff sharing, we need to examine the extent to which we may, in the past, have earned these anxieties, But even if we were perfect, and there were no ways we could improve our support for families and for children in the family context, we still would have parents' perceptions of us to contend with.

One of the main stumbling blocks to effective communication between educators and the community is, I believe, that a lot of the cherished buzz words in our field -- the ones that signal quality and goodness to other professionals -- may be scaring the living daylights out of the general public. "Child development" is one example. One legislator told me that upon hearing this expression he visualizes an infant with wires coming out of the brain, while a Ph.D. scientist from Harvard sends electrical currents through the wires to "stimulate" (another "buzz" word) the brain. "Intervention" is another word we use all the time. Does that mean, to a parent, that we will penetrate the autonomy of the family in order to make decisions society believes are best for the child even if the parent disagrees? These kinds of "interventions" have often appeared in the news.

Child and family rights are changing. We have an important role to play in contributing to the direction of that change. To do so, we must shape our arguments to be persuasive, not to other early childhood educators, but to the general public and to legislators. That means we must forego jargon. Jargon is a short-cut language which is very useful in communicating with others in our field. Unfortunately, the same words that light up green with our fellow professionals very probably light up red with decision-makers and the general public.

How can we persuade parents and politicans to support day care? What arguments will work? The two most important arguments deal with the economic values and the pro-family nature of day care.

In the economic sphere, the problem is that our society is built on an economic base which values short-term over long-term investments. Legislators will agree with you that your day care program will contribute to the healthy development of children you enroll.. But they may also believe that the payoff from that contribution may be years in the future.

If you can also demonstrate a potential benefit this year, the same year as the appropriation, only then will they do more than sympathize -- they will act. If you can, for example, figure out some way of presenting data that your school age day care will result in less vandalism in this same year, you have a strong case.

Since day care is connected with employment, the increased earning of parents will result in increased taxes at the state and federal level. There have been several useful studies which point out that if parents using day care are permitted to pay for it on a sliding fee scale as their earnings increase, then they pay taxes which offset the cost of the partial day care subsidy, at both the federal and the state level. A Colorado study found that day care staff and parents who work because they have day care contribute substantially to the tax base of the state. These are compelling arguments to decision-makers.

The pro-family issues are a little more ambivalent, but very interesting. Many legislators, policy-makers, and intellectuals are developing the following line of reasoning. Our government interventions into family life have generally been less than successful, at best, and sometimes they have been disasters. Foster care, by and large, does not nurture and does not give a child a permanent home. Our youth services have seldom rehabilitated any youth; on the contrary, they seem to make problems worse. In cases of child abuse, our state efforts are futile; we intrude into families which would be far better off without the intrusion, and we fail to intrude when life is at stake. How can we ever know the difference?

It is beginning to be felt that our best investment of dollars would be in shoring up the family. Examining some of the worst cases of state intervention and child abuse, one asks: would this family have been any worse off if there had been no government intervention at all? Sometimes the case is so bad that nothing could be worse.

You and I might make an immediate leap to the conclusion that if this is the way policy-makers are beginning to think, then they would be receptive to services that support the family. Yet that is an idea beyond the present thinking. What policy-makers generally agree on now is that you get better return on your public investment of funds if you spend them to shore up the family rather than substituting an agency or a service in place of the family on behalf of the child.

What worries me is the fact that as this argument is discussed, it is likely that the "family" is placed, figuratively, on one side of the ledger. This is the good side. On the other side we place "government intervention" and the word "institutions." This is the bad side. On this bad side we list all the things government has done to substitute itself for the family. Over on the good side, there is just one word, "family." The family is left all alone, unsupported and without services, because of the assumption that services are institutions and are substitutive. Clearly our task for the next year is to make it clear that not all services are the family-substitutive -- that, in fact, many are or could be family-supportive.

There is one final political issue which I find especially baffling, and that is the "social victims" philosophy. I fear that the high level graduates of schools of social work may be coming out with a philosophy something like this: Equity demands that priority be given for public expenditures to the rock bottom, hard core poor. Until we have met the needs of all of them, we cannot spend public money on anybody else. Therefore, day care must only be for the very poor, to improve the quality of life for them, since they are not upwardly mobile and cannot offer their children better opportunities.

Implementing a philosophy like this leads to decisions that parents may use day care only if they start poor and stay poor. I might argue that a philosophy like that keeps people poor, since if they use day care as economic opportunity, they will cease to be poor and become ineligible for the help. The rebuttal to my argument would be that there is no worry about that, since services are for the rock bottom poor, and anybody who increased their earnings is not a true social victim. The government is making a mistake, it is helping the wrong person, if that person uses the help to improve his or her position in life. There is therefore no injustice in terminating that person's day care support, as she was not a true victim.

I find this argument very difficult to rebut. I personally reject it and believe that day care should offer economic opportunity and a ladder out of poverty to every parent who can use it that way. But I am suggesting to you that we have very difficult attitudes to face, and that we need to be finding ways to address them, not by talking to each other, but by talking to others who disagree with us.

Probably our best arguments are the economic ones. We should be gathering data to support this type of argument because it is so powerful. And we need, as others here have suggested, to be building our constituencies in favor of extended day programs because the time is right for those who plan well and have skills in leading. After all, it is only a very little inkind or cash subsidy that we need.

It seems to me, after hearing from all of our speakers and participants, that school-age day care is an issue that can be won. I am glad to know that we have a network of people interested in developing school-age day care still further. And the fact that all of you have achieved as much as you have says to me that we can extend this idea of extended day care in many directions in the near future.

Footnote

1. Who's Taking Care of the Children? Family Circle, Vol. 92, No. 3, February 20, 1979, p. 88.

WHEELOCK COLLEGE

announces

SCHOOL'S OUT!

A CONFERENCE ON

DAY CARE FOR THE SCHOOL-AGE CHILD

June 15 - 16, 1979

BOSTON

DAY CARE FOR THE SCHOOL AGE CHILD

Parents across the nation are becoming increasingly vocal about their need for day care for their school-age children. In a recent nationwide survey of working women, nearly 30% with children between the ages of 6 and 13 reported leaving their children home alone or with brothers and sisters after school. Yet these same mothers reported that not one in a hundred would leave her children home alone if given the choice.

"School's Out!: A Conference on Day Care for the School-age Child" will provide a forum for examining responses to this growing need. Speakers will include program administrators and teachers, public officials, child development specialists, and child-care advocates who have first-hand experience in school-age child care programs.

The conference program has been designed for those who are currently involved in some aspect of school-age programs and those concerned individuals — parents, teachers, community representatives, school officials and others — who want to know more about these programs. Together, participants and presenters will explore options for care; clarify issues; isolate and identify problems; and actively pursue solutions. In order to achieve these goals, participants are encouraged to come to the conference prepared to share materials, experiences and program-specific information.

PROGRAM

Friday, June 15, 1979

8:00 pm Welcome and Introduction
(Wheelock Auditorium, 180 The Riverway, Boston)

Elizabeth Ann Liddle
Academic Dean, Wheelock College

8:10pm Keynote Address: **"Children First: A Look at the Needs of School-Age Children"**

Docia Zavitkovsky
Director, Santa Monica Preschool Education and Children's Centers, Santa Monica Unified School District, Santa Monica, California

Ms. Zavitkovsky's talk will be followed by a question-and-answer session.

9:30 pm Coffee and Refreshments

Saturday, June 16, 1979

9:00 am Registration and Coffee

9:30 am General Session: **"Different Perspectives on Critical Issues"**

James Levine (Moderator)
Research Associate and Co-Director, After School Day Care Project, Wellesley College, Center for Research on Women; author of *Day Care and the Public Schools* and *Who Will Raise the Children: New Options for Fathers and Mothers*

Charles Jarm
Director, First Avenue After-School Day Care, Chinatown Planning Council, New York, New York

Judith Rosen
Director, Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, Virginia

James Strickland
Executive Director, Child, Inc., and Check-A-Child, Austin, Texas

Natalie G. Zuckerman
Member, Brookline School Committee, Brookline, Massachusetts

10:45 am Interactive Seminars (A-J)

A. **Program Model: St. Louis Child Care Services, Biddeford, Maine**

A description and discussion of a program that features both home- and center-based care, and a federal project for integrating young children with special needs.

Sr. Rachel Saint Cyr
Child Care Home Direct Services Staff

Peter Dudevoir
Children's Center and Summer Program Supervisor

Betty Van Wyck
Director, St. Louis Child Care Services

B. **Program Model: The Brookline After-School Special Program at the Sewall School, Brookline, Massachusetts**

A description and discussion of a parent-controlled, public-school-sponsored program featuring town-wide eligibility for children in grades 3-6.

Samuel Wheeler
Chairman of the Board, Brookline After-School Special Program

Cynthia E. Wilson
Director, Brookline After-School Special Program

C. **Program Model: The Santa Monica Unified Schools Child Development Centers, Santa Monica, California**

A description and discussion of a program using public school facilities and funded through Title XX, focused on the effective use of community resources.

Docia Zavitkovsky
Director, Santa Monica Preschool Education and Child Development Centers, Santa Monica Unified School District, Santa Monica, California

D. **Staff Development: Models and Roadblocks**

A look at some ingredients of successful staff development programs and major barriers faced during implementation.

James Robertson
Director, Plowshares Child Care Program, Inc., West Newton, Massachusetts

E. **Family Day Care and the School-Age Child: A Need for Adaptation**

A panel discussion focused on effective and creative ways to adapt the family day care model to meet the needs of the older child.

Amy B. Squibb (Moderator)
Director, Simmons College Child Study Center, Boston, Massachusetts; former chairperson, New England Association for Family Day Care

F. **Financial Management of Programs for School-Age Children: A National Poll**

A presentation and discussion of five critical financial management issues facing those concerned with program development and administration.

Roger Neugebauer
Editor, "Child Care Information Exchange"

G. **Parents and Staff: Sharing Program Decisions about "Their" Children**

A discussion of the conflicts, tensions and aspirations that must be confronted by parents and staff as they work together on behalf of children.

Barbara Schram
Coordinator, Human Services Program, Northeastern University; former consultant, Bank Street Day Care Consultation Unit; community organizer on issues of parent involvement in schools

H. **Federal Trends: Public Policy**

A look at how public policy influences program accessibility, funding, design and implementation.

Gertrude L. Hoffman
Specialist on Day Care Services, Administration of Public Services, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C.

I. **Program Evaluation: A Collaborative Model**

An approach to formative program evaluation, grounded in realistic goal-setting and practical implementation, that involves teachers, parents, and administrators.

Joan Bergstrom
Professor and Chairperson, Early Childhood Education Department, Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts; Fellow, Program on Women, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois

J. **Who Killed the Cranston Bill? Developing Skills in Working With Legislators**

A practical session focused on building skills for advocacy based on an understanding of the legislators' perspective on the issues.

Gwen G. Morgan
Instructor, Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts; Vice-President, Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc.; consultant on day care and regulatory administration

12:30 pm Lunch

2:00 pm Interactive Seminars (K-T)

K. **Program Model: The Driscoll Extended Day Program, Driscoll School, Brookline, Massachusetts**

A description and discussion of a parent-controlled, public-school-sponsored program, with eligibility limited to primary-grade children in one school.

Irwin Blumer
Principal, Driscoll School

Alan Cohen
Director, Driscoll Extended Day Program

L. **Program Model: Extended Day Care Program, Fairfax County Office for Children, Fairfax, Virginia**

A description and discussion of a program administered by the county Office for Children, with 17 site locations, including two for children with special needs.

Millicent Grant
Coordinator, Extended Day Care,
Fairfax County Office for Children

M. **Program Model: Child Care Project, Educational Development Center, Newton, Massachusetts**

A description and discussion of a program with mixed age grouping of children ages 3 – 14, an initial design by the children, and an original location in an industrial park.

Meg Barden Cline
Director, University Day School; Lecturer in Early Childhood Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; former director of Child Care Project, E.D.C., Newton, Massachusetts

N. **Drop-In Care: What's It All About?**

A description of this program type and a discussion of key issues from the perspective of a current Drop-In Program director.

James Strickland
Executive Director, Check-A-Child, Austin, Texas

O. **Starting Programs: Critical Elements and Stumbling Blocks**

An examination of the essential components to be considered when starting a program, including strategies for problem-solving.

Mickey Seltzer
Assistant Director, Human Relations/Youth Resources Commission, Brookline, Massachusetts; Advisor to the Brookline Extended Day Programs; Co-Director, After School Day Care Project

P. **Financial Management of Programs for School-Age Children: A National Poll**

A presentation and discussion of five critical financial management issues facing those concerned with program development and administration.

Roger Neugebauer
Editor, "Child Care Information Exchange"

Q. **Parents and Staff: Sharing Program Decisions about "Their" Children**

A discussion of the conflicts, tensions and aspirations that must be confronted by parents and staff as they work together on behalf of children.

Barbara Schram
Coordinator, Human Services Program, Northeastern University; former consultant, Bank Street Day Care Consultation Unit; community organizer on issues of parent involvement in schools

R. **Federal Trends: Public Policy**

A look at how public policy influences program accessibility, funding, design and implementation.

Gertrude L. Hoffman
Specialist on Day Care Services, Administration of Public Services, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C.

S. **Program Evaluation: A Collaborative Model**

An approach to formative program evaluation, grounded in realistic goal-setting and practical implementation, that involves teachers, parents and administrators.

Joan Bergstrom
Professor and Chairperson, Early Childhood Education Department, Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts; Fellow, Program on Women, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois

T. **Legal Issues: Questions and Answers**

An overview of the key legal issues confronting those concerned with program development and implementation.

Robert Weber
Managing Attorney, Children's Law Project, Boston, Massachusetts; former general counsel, Office for Children, Massachusetts

4:00 pm General Session: **"Future Directions: Becoming Advocates and Influencing Policy"**

Gwen G. Morgan
Instructor, Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts; Vice-President, Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc.; consultant on day care and regulatory administration

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To register, fill in the form attached and mail it to the Office of Continuing Education, Wheelock College, 200 The Riverway, Boston, MA, 02215. There will be no registration at the door. Attendance is limited. To insure your participation in this conference, early registration is encouraged. Registration deadline is June 8, 1979.

REGISTRATION FEE

The registration fee is $30. This includes the Friday evening and all-day Saturday program, all working materials distributed at the conference, lunch on Saturday, and coffee and refreshments as indicated in the program. Payment in full (or a purchase order) must accompany the registration form. You will receive confirmation of your registration. If, after you have registered, you find that you will be unable to attend, simply notify us at least one week before the conference to receive a full refund.

CONFERENCE LOCATION

Wheelock College is located on Boston's "green belt," at the intersection of The Riverway and Brookline Avenue, near Beth Israel Hospital and Sears. It is close to the Fenway stop on the Riverside (green) subway line. A taxi from Logan airport costs approximately $8.00.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Conference participants are responsible for making their own hotel arrangements. If you call our office (617-734-5200 ext. 160) we will be glad to provide you with a list of nearby, centrally located hotels.

TAX DEDUCTION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES

Treasury regulation 1.162-5 permits an income tax deduction for educational expenses (registration fees, cost of travel, meals, and lodging) undertaken to: 1) maintain or improve skills required in one's employment, or 2) meet express requirements of an employer.

CHILD CARE

Limited child care will be available on Saturday, June 16, at a cost of $5 per child. To reserve a space for your child, please check the appropriate box on the registration form and include the child care fee with the conference fee.

CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Andrea Kowaloff, Educational Coordinator, Day Care Training Programs, Wheelock College (chairperson), James Levine, Gwen Morgan, James Robertson, and Mickey Seltzer.

APPENDIX B

Selected Bibliography

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*Documents with ED numbers are available through the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) in microfiche and paper copy, unless otherwise noted. (For information on obtaining ERIC documents, in libraries or by mail, see page 104.) Some of these documents are also available from their original source.

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* *

For further information on school-age child care, one or more of the following resources may be helpful:

School-Age Child Care Project
Wellesley Center for Research on Women
Wellesley College
Wellesley, MA 02181

Children's Defense Fund
1520 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036

Office of Continuing Education
Wheelock College
200 The Riverway
Boston, MA 02215

ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary
and Early Childhood Education
College of Education
University of Illinois
Urbana, IL 61801

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